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Recurring patterns in the novels of L. M. Montgomery.

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RECURRING PATTERNS IN
THE NOVELS OF L. M. MONTGOMERY

by

SUSAN ELIZABETH JONES

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of
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Abstract

The novels of L.M. Montgomery center around the youth's quest for identity, a theme which had previously been restricted to male heroes almost exclusively. Montgomery is one of the early writers who successfully captures the problems and decisions encountered by young girls as they grow up. The author was able to universalize her personal experiences as a child and a young woman to create patterns within her work which contain archetypal overtones.

Each heroine is exposed to a variety of male and female archetypes such as the wise old man, the hag guardian, and the wicked stepmother who either encourage or attempt to block the girl's quest. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon nature as comforter and teacher, and repeated use is made of the seasonal cycle, wherein the quest is begun in spring and completed in autumn. These patterns are repeated from novel to novel, but the emphasis upon the particular goal within the quest, and the assortment of formative influences encountered by the heroines, vary with each book to create a group of highly individual and memorable characters.

The fact that the quest is pursued by girls, whose traditional role had been a passive one as keepers of the hearth, creates unique tensions for Montgomery's heroines. The desire to complete the quest and follow the traditionally masculine

role as pursuer of light is complicated not only by a lack of active female-role models, but also by an intense longing for the dead mother, which creates a reluctance to leave the world of childhood associated with fantasy and myth. A very real conflict emerges between the worlds of conscious adult reality and the child's mythic awareness and perceptions.

The recurring archetypal and psychological patterns in Montgomery's novels provide a most important key, not only to the understanding of her own works, but also to provide valuable insights into later treatments of the feminine quest for identity within fiction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
The "Anne" Books.....	8
The Story Girl" Books.....	44
The "Emily" Books.....	57
The "Pat" Books.....	80
Montgomery's Single Novels.....	89
Conclusion.....	106
Bibliography.....	108
Vita	112

Introduction

Northrop Frye, in The Educated Imagination, maintains that "...the loss and regaining of identity is, I think, the framework of all literature."¹ Certainly the quest for identity is the predominant theme associated with youthful heroes from Pip, in Great Expectations, to Holden Caulfield in The Catcher In The Rye. Traditionally, such a process of development was reserved for the male child as the pursuer of light; the female child as Kore, or maiden, was seen as the "...fount of permanence."² Nina Auerbach discusses the static role usually played by the youthful heroine of the Victorian novel:

Cast as they were in the role of emotional and spiritual catalysts, it is not surprising that girls who function as protagonists of Victorian literature are rarely allowed to develop: in its refusal to subject females to the evolutionary process, the Victorian novel takes a significant step backward from one of its principal sources, the novels of Jane Austen. Even when they are interesting and "wicked," Victorian heroines tend to be static figures like Becky Sharp: when they are "good," their lack of development is an important factor in the Victorian reversal of

¹Northrop Frye, The Educated Imagination (Toronto: C.B.C., 1963), p. 21.

²Sven Armens, Archetypes Of The Family In Literature (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), p. 32.

Pope's sweeping denunciation -- "most women have no characters at all" -- into a cardinal virtue. Little girls in Victorian literature are rarely children, nor are they allowed to grow up. Instead, they exist largely as a diffusion of emotional and religious grace, representing "nothing but love." ... Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and George Eliot's Maggie Tulliver are two more sharply-etched little girls who grow into women, but even they represent in an angrier and more impassioned way, "nothing but love." ... in Victorian literature, little boys were allowed, even encouraged, to partake of original sin; but little girls rarely were.³

Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland changes the focus of youthful development to center on the girl. The novels of L. M. Montgomery continue and develop the feminine quest for identity. It is significant that Mark Twain wrote to Montgomery that Anne was "the dearest, and most lovable child in fiction since the immortal Alice."⁴ Montgomery's heroines imitate Alice in a series of encounters with masculine and feminine presences who either encourage or block the girl's knowledge and acceptance of self. Montgomery's stories are all, more or less, reworkings of her own reactions to the formative influences of her youth, but the presentation of her personal myth often overflows

³Nina Auerbach, "Alice And Wonderland: A Curious Child," Victorian Studies, XVII (September, 1973), 45-6.

⁴Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, A Biography of L.M. Montgomery, Author of "Anne of Green Gables" (Don Mills, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., 1975), p. 72.

into archetypal patterns of dream and ritual. Elizabeth Waterston observes:

Many women have lived fabulous lives. But in L. M. Montgomery's case the real miracle is that she could exploit her experience in an enduring art-form. She universalized her story; she recreated it against vivid regional settings; she structured it into mythical patterns. She retold legends she had lived, in haunting and memorable style.⁵

Frye places the identity quest in the category of Romance, and discusses its affinities to both ritual and dream:

The quest-romance has analogies to both rituals and dreams, and the rituals examined by Frazer and the dreams examined by Jung show the remarkable similarity in form that we should expect of two symbolic structures analogous to the same thing. Translated into dream terms, the quest-romance is the search of the libido or desiring self for a fulfillment that will deliver it from the anxieties of reality but will still contain that reality. The antagonists of the quest are often sinister figures, giants, ogres, witches, and magicians, that clearly have a parental origin; and yet redeemed and emancipated parental figures are involved too, as they are in the psychological quests of both Freud and Jung. Translated into ritual terms, the quest-romance is the victory of fertility over the wasteland.⁶

⁵Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," The Clear Spirit: Twenty Canadian Women and their Times, ed. Mary Quayle Innis (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), p. 198.

⁶Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 193.

Montgomery's books contain a wealth of parent figures, displaying various degrees of good or evil. There are not only primary parental figures, but often secondary influences as well, such as the "wise old man", the step-mother and the hag-guardian. The stress is laid on different figures in each story, thus guiding the manner and the direction in which the heroine will develop.

An underlying theme in all the books is the realization and acceptance of sexuality by the heroine, and the final, although usually delayed, triumph of fertility, through betrothal and marriage, over the wasteland of repressed sexuality. Often one of the figures blocking sexual acceptance is, at least partially, the girl herself. The heroines, like their author, wish frequently to prolong childhood and delay the fulfillment of the quest, perhaps in a desire to be sheltered in the safety of the maternal "Physical Hearth." The longing for the father is a fairly overt theme in Montgomery's books; her own father lived out west for most of Maud's childhood, and left her to stay with her maternal grandparents. There are many subtle indications, however, that Montgomery and her heroines missed and desired the love of the mother. The stress on the particular need of the child varies from book to book; Pat Gardiner, fearing change and loving home above all things, is a caretaker of the feminine Physical Hearth, while Emily Starr, following in her dead father's footsteps as a writer, is a keeper of the masculine Sacred Flame.

Armens, in Archetypes of the Family in Literature, differentiates between the female principle of permanence and protection, and the male principle of initiation, quest, and maturation. The Physical Hearth is a safe and comfortable extension of the womb:

These transformations of the Archetypal Feminine seem to indicate, as opposed to a later world of patriarchy characterized as "solar," "conscious," and "rational," the existence of a primordial matriarchate which may be designated as "lunar," "unconscious," and predominantly nutritional, concerned, as is the infantile stage of man, with hunger and its satisfaction through food. It is a world based on the undeniable priority of the mother as a physical source.⁷

It is normal and natural that the child should eventually wish to leave the Physical Hearth and prove his or her ability as a responsible person. Jung observes that "'Child' means something evolving towards independence. Thus it cannot do without detaching itself from its origins: abandonment is therefore a necessary condition, not just a concomitant symptom."⁸ The male principle is frightening to the child at first, but contains intriguing possibilities:

Suddenly he is aware that he too possesses this power... The revelation of the strength latent within

⁷Sven Armens, Archetypes of the Family in Literature, p. 27.

⁸C. G. Jung. The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 9, Part 1, 2nd ed. ed. Sir Herbert Read, Micheal Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire, executive ed., translated by R. F. C. Hull (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 168.

him, as it is demonstrated in the grown father, makes him seek guidance for his aspiration. Such guidance is not to be found in the matriarchal environs of the Physical Hearth, but is readily available if he will but heed his father's cry from the doorway of the Sacred Fire. It is a call to knowledge and power but it is also a call to pain.⁹

The heroines naturally have ambivalent feelings towards the pleasure-pain principle of the quest, but sooner or later Montgomery pushes them out into the world of awareness and maturity.

The world of nature is often set in opposition to the world of prosaic reality. Nature is seen as a teacher, but also as an escape, and the idyllic Island settings are often associated with the nostalgia and glamour of youth. Waterston observes that "The identification of island with orchard with spring with youth is tactfully handled and effective."¹⁰ Frye notes:

The green world has analogies, not only to the fertile world of ritual, but to the dream world that we create out of our own desires. This dream world collides with the stumbling and blinded follies of the world of experience.¹¹

For Montgomery's heroines nature represents the healing world of fantasy, where they can imagine themselves to be

⁹Sven Armens, Archetypes of the Family in Literature, p. 34.

¹⁰Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 206.

¹¹Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 183.

7

carefree nymphs or dryads, untroubled by any intruding male presence. The frequent recurrence of the orchard or garden motif also suggests the mother or womb. Jung says of the mother figure: "The archetype is often associated with things and places standing for fertility and fruitfulness: the cornucopia, a ploughed field, a garden."¹² The island is thus associated with the related themes of youth, mother, and fantasy.

It is interesting to note the seasonal cycles imposed upon the books: the majority begin in the spring and end in autumn. The heroines eventually accept their own fecundity, but the mood is autumnal and subdued, rather than the total renewal of a second spring. This pattern follows Montgomery's personal history; neither the author nor her heroines managed to marry before their late twenties.

As Montgomery's heroines mature, the emphasis shifts from a predominantly mythical treatment of the child to the psychological implications of the young woman's acceptance of reality and sexual fulfillment. The idea that myth recedes as one grows older is frequently expressed by characters in Montgomery's novels, and a very real tension for her heroines is the conflict between the desire to complete the quest and the wish to retain the child's link with the world of myth.

The use of archetypes is combined with recurrent psychological and narrative patterns in Montgomery's work,

¹²C. G. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part 1, p. 81.

and it is through the exploration of all three perspectives that her novels can most completely be viewed as portrayals of the youth's search for identity. The emphasis of these patterns varies within her works to create a group of heroines whose perceptions of themselves differ from each other, according to the stress laid on particular formative influences in their lives. The changing emphasis of these patterns from story to story within Montgomery's novels, and the lack of critical attention her work has received in the past warrants an examination of her entire canon of prose fiction in terms of recurrent mythical, psychological, and narrative modes of expression.

The "Anne" Books

Anne of Green Gables opens with the description of a brook in Avonlea:

...it was reputed to be an intricate, headlong brook in its earlier course through those woods, with dark secrets of pool and cascade; but by the time it reached Lynde's Hollow it was a quiet, well conducted little stream, for not even a brook could run past Mrs. Rachel Lynde's door without due regard for decency and decorum.¹

The transformation made by the brook is the same one that will be required of Anne. She must relinquish her "headlong" ways and her "dark secrets" of personality if she is to be accepted by Avonlea society, personified by Mrs. Rachel Lynde, the village's Mrs. Grundy. The story deals primarily with Anne's halting progress towards a reasonable acceptance of her place in the world around her.

At the beginning of the book she is only willing to view herself in terms of her imagination; and she does not wish to temper her fantasy with any reality because she has had no rewarding experiences in the real world. Displeased with her appearance, she imagines herself with prettier features, although she finds her red hair to be an inescapable reality:

¹L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1908), p. 1. All quotations from the novel are from this edition.

9

"I don't mind the other things so much -- the freckles and the green eyes and my skinniness. I can imagine them away. I can imagine that I have a beautiful rose-leaf complexion and lovely starry violet eyes. But I cannot imagine that red hair away. I do my best. I think to myself, 'Now my hair is a glorious black, black as the raven's wing.' But all the time I know it is just plain red, and it breaks my heart. It will be my lifelong sorrow. I read of a girl once in a novel who had a lifelong sorrow, but it wasn't red hair."

(A. of G. G., p. 22)

Red hair is, indeed, Anne's "lifelong sorrow", because it represents to her a reality from which she can never be free. Even later in the book, when her hair has darkened to a "handsome auburn", she remains sensitive about it. It is because of remarks about hair that she has a tantrum with Mrs. Lynde, and cracks a slate over Gilbert Blythe's head. Mrs. Lynde, as a representative of the Avonlea world, and Gilbert as a reminder of sexuality, both anger her by calling attention to the reality of her red hair. As Anne observes, heroines in novels do not have to worry about such prosaic "lifelong sorrows;" her own is irritatingly real.

Montgomery does not wish Anne to relinquish all of her dreams; rather she must learn how to blend the proper amounts of fact and fancy in her life. Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert each tend to encourage one of these aspects of Anne's development. Matthew, himself an "...odd looking personage, with an ungainly figure and long iron-gray hair that touched his stooping shoulders, and a full soft brown beard..." (p 12),

does not fit in very well with the real world, especially with members of the opposite sex.

Women were bad enough in all conscience, but little girls were worse. He detested the way they had of sideling past him timidly, with sidewise glances, as if they expected him to gobble them up at a mouthful if they ventured to say a word. This was the Avonlea type of well-bred little girl. But this freckled witch was very different, and although he found it rather difficult for his slower intelligence to keep up with her brisk mental processes he thought that he "Kind of liked her chatter."

(A. of G. G., p. 20)

Matthew and Anne are "kindred spirits", as she herself observes. Neither can fit in easily with the real world around them, and the old man probably receives as much pleasure in Anne's flights of imagination as she does herself. Marilla caustically observes to herself, "'I never saw such an infatuated man. The more she talks and the odder the things she says, the more he's delighted evidently.'" (A. of G. G., p. 115) Marilla takes on the prime responsibility for Anne's bringing up, warning Matthew not to "put his oar in," but Matthew's occasional interferences often set Anne back upon the road of reality. It is Matthew who advises Anne to apologize to Mrs. Lynde, thus reconciling her with her society, and he frequently intercedes with Marilla to let Anne attend social functions where she gains necessary experience in relating to other people.

Matthew is, in fact, a figure of the "wise old man." Jung describes this archetypal figure as one who "...always

appears when the hero is in a hopeless and desperate situation from which only profound reflection or a lucky idea... can extricate him."² The figure functions as a rescuer and a guide, one who "...in women...induces the liveliest spiritual aspirations and interests..."³ Frye sees the figure of the "wise old man" as one who belongs to the genre of romance:

Romance has a counterpart to the benevolent retiring airon of comedy in its figure of the "wise old man," as Jung calls him, like Prospero, Merlin, or the Palmer of Spenser's second quest, often a magician who affects the action he watches over.⁴

Matthew helps Anne as he watches over her quest towards reality and acceptance of self, quietly encouraging her to expand in both of her worlds, and unobtrusively balancing Marilla's overly strong doses of harsh fact:

...Matthew thanked his stars many a time and oft that he had nothing to do with bringing her up. That was Marilla's exclusive duty; if it had been his he would have been worried over frequent conflicts between inclination and said duty. As it was, he was free to "spoil Anne" -- Marilla's phrasing -- as much as he liked. But it was not such a bad arrangement after all; a little "appreciation" sometimes does quite as much good as all the conscientious "bringing up" in the world.

(A. of G. G., p. 247)

²C. G. Jung, Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part 1, pp. 217-18.

³Ibid., pp. 214-15.

⁴Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 195.

Marilla wishes to accept Anne only in terms of reality. She ignores Anne's wish to be called Cordelia, which, as Elizabeth Waterston notes, suggests Lear's loving daughter. Anne and Matthew first became acquainted largely through Anne's imagination, but when Marilla wishes to learn about Anne's past ^{she} cautions her to rely purely on fact:

"Oh, what I know about myself isn't really worth telling," said Anne eagerly. "If you'll only let me tell you what I imagine about myself you'll think it ever so much more interesting."

"No, I don't want any of your imaginings. Just stick to bald facts."

(A. of G. G., p. 49)

It is the relation of Anne's true past that stirs Marilla's pity and influences her decision to adopt Anne. She can deal with reality, but she views with distrust anything fanciful or carefree; she is "...always slightly distrustful of sunshine, which seemed to her too dancing and irresponsible a thing for a world which was meant to be taken seriously..." (A. of G. G., p. 5)

Marilla is not the typical example of the female Physical Hearth. She is not as helpful as Matthew towards Anne and her quest, but she is able to assist the girl in learning the value of the real world. She becomes an obstacle only when she tries to insist that Anne ignore her creative ability and live in total reality. At these times she becomes the figure of the step-mother:

The false mother, the celebrated cruel stepmother, is also common: her victim is, of course, usually female, and the resulting conflict is portrayed in

many ballads and folktales of the Cinderella type. ... In more realistic modes the cruel parent speaks with the voice of, or takes the form of, a narrowminded public opinion.⁵

Marilla is hardly the cruel step-mother of romance, but she does care what her neighbours think:

"You can punish me in any way you like, Marilla. You can shut me up in a dark, damp dungeon inhabited by snakes and toads and feed me only on bread and water and I shall not complain. But I cannot ask Mrs. Lynde to forgive me."

"We're not in the habit of shutting people up in dark, damp dungeons," said Marilla drily, "especially as they're rather scarce in Avonlea. But apologize to Mrs. Lynde you must and shall and you'll stay here in your room until you can tell me you're willing to do it."

(A. of G. G., p. 88)

Marilla's desire to suppress any non-conformity in Anne is all the stronger because she senses a similar strain deep within herself:

Marilla felt sternly that all this should be sternly reprov'd, but she was hampered by the undeniable fact that some of the things Anne had said, especially about the minister's sermons and Mr. Bell's prayers, were what she herself had really thought deep down in her heart for years, but had never given expression to. It almost seemed to her that those secret, unuttered, critical

⁵Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 199.

thoughts had suddenly taken visible and accusing shape and form in the person of this outspoken morsel of neglected humanity.

(A. of G. G., p. 106)

One reason that Marilla cannot be a total mother figure is because she too must undergo a transformation. Anne must learn to include more reality in her world and Marilla must learn to accept and acknowledge love; both must learn to accept themselves more fully. The shared identity of a young girl and an older woman is a recurrent pattern in Montgomery.

Jung observes:

The figure corresponding to the Kore in a woman is generally a double one, i.e., a mother and a maiden, which is to say that she appears now as one, now as the other.⁶

Montgomery, herself personally experienced this archetype. When she was a girl she had two imaginary playmates:

It was less loneliness than delicious fantasy that provided the little girl with two companions to chatter to, looking-glass figures who came to shadowy life in the oval glass doors of the bookcase used as a china cabinet. In the left-hand door was Katie Maurice, a child of Maud's own age, with whom she shared endless confidences. Behind the right-hand door lived Lucy Gray, a grown-up widowed lady who entrusted Maud with sad tales of past tragedies. Katie Maurice and Lucy Gray did not like each other, and Maud favoured Katie, but she was polite to Lucy Gray and conscientious about in-

⁶C. G. Jung, The Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part 1, p. 184.

cluding both in her friendship and attention.⁷

Montgomery claims not to have been influenced by Wordsworth's poem, "Lucy Gray," although the ideas of the solitary child and the reversal of distraught parents searching for their lost child are significant. The concept of an elderly playmate named Lucy is interesting enough even if the poem is ignored. Lucy was Montgomery's first name, but she detested it and always asked to be called Maud. Maud's grandmother was also named Lucy, and although the little girl undoubtedly felt some affection for her, there was also much resentment towards the rigid, unsympathetic old woman. The ambivalence of Maud's attitude shows in her scrupulous politeness to an imaginary playmate for whom she had little affection.

Marilla is more flexible than Maud's grandmother, but they do share common traits:

Aspects of Lucy Woolner MacNeill come to life in Anne's guardian Marilla Cuthbert and Emily's Aunt Elizabeth Murray, strong women endowed with human character weaknesses they may or may not recognize and deplore but be powerless to change; women stern but just, governed by a sense of duty, slightly tyrannical, not dour but not outgoing, capable of more affection than they can allow themselves to show, seldom uncertain of the principles by which they lived.⁸

⁷Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, p. 6.

⁸Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, p. 14.

As a child Maud may have created an elderly playmate to act as a missing parent figure just as Lewis Carroll's Alice imagines a second self who punishes improper behavior:

...and once she remembered trying to box her own ears for having cheated herself in a game of croquet she was playing against herself, for this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people.⁹

The theme of twins runs through many of the "Anne" books, often with Anne placed in a parental role. Before she comes to Green Gables she has looked after three sets of twins, and in Anne of Avonlea she helps to raise Davy and Dora Keith, who have also been adopted by Marilla; eventually Anne has twin girls of her own, whom she names Anne and Diana. Montgomery was very interested in the idea of double or multiple personalities:

"...as to there being only two of me' as you ask -- bless the man, there's a hundred of me. ...Some of the me's are good, some not. It's better than being just two or three, I think -- more exciting, more interesting. There are some people who are only one. They must find life as insufferable a bore as other people find them. By the way, have you ever read any scientific articles on the curious mental phenomena of "double personalities" or "double consciousness"? If you

⁹Lewis Carroll, "Alice's Adventures In Wonderland," The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures In Wonderland & Through The Looking Glass, Martin Gardner, ed. (New York: Bramhall House, 1960), pp. 32-33.

have, you will agree with me that they are very interesting and curious.¹⁰

The figure of Lucy Gray turned out to be merely another image of her grandmother, but as she matured, Montgomery was able to create a variety of parent figures to answer the different needs in her heroines.

Marilla, as a spinster, embodies the images of both mother and maiden within one character, like Montgomery herself, who was thirty-four years old and had no immediate intentions of marrying when Anne of Green Gables was written. The idea of the maiden is reinforced in Anne's playmate, Diana, suggestive of the chaste goddess. Anne and Diana are "kindred spirits" who vow eternal friendship and devotion to one another over an imagined stream of running water in Diana's garden. The emphasis on the joys of girlhood companionship enjoyed in pleasant, fertile surroundings is repeated throughout the book.

The world of nature is really a truer symbol of the mother than Marilla Cuthbert. Montgomery was very aware of nature as a nurturing force:

For lands have personalities just as well as human beings; and to know that personality you must live in the land and companion it, and draw sustenance of body and spirit from it; so only can

¹⁰L. M. Montgomery, "Letter to Ephraim Weber," The Green Gables Letters, Wilfred Eggleston, ed. (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1960), pp. 24-25.

you really know a land and be known
of it.¹¹

The world of nature is an escape for Anne from reality and responsibility, but her attempts to withdraw into nature often result in small personal disasters. Dissatisfied with her plain white sailor hat, Anne adds garlands of wild roses and buttercups to her attire, thus shocking her prim Sunday school classmates, and her second run-in with Gilbert Blythe is a result of Anne's forgetfulness of time while enjoying nature:

...Anne, who had not been picking gum at all but was wandering happily in the far end of the grove, waist deep among the bracken, singing softly to herself, with a wreath of rice lilies on her hair as if she were some wild divinity of the shadowy places, was latest of all.

(A. of G. G., p. 146)

Green Gables itself seems almost to be a part of nature.

Matthew's father had built his homestead

...as far away...from his fellow man without actually retreating into the woods...built at the farthest edge of his cleared land...barely visible from the main road along which all the other Avonlea houses were so sociably situated.

(A. of G. G., p. 4)

The east window, the direction which Anne's room faces, is "...greened over by a tangle of vines." (A. of G. G., p. 5), and overlooks an orchard of white cherry trees and young

¹¹L. M. Montgomery, The Alpine Path: The Story of My Career (Don Mills, Ont.: Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., 1917), p. 11.

birches, suggestive of both maidens and brides to Montgomery. Anne names the flowering cherry outside of her window the Snow Queen.

Giving names to favourite spots of natural beauty allows Anne to feel an added closeness to the outdoor world, but her unchecked imagination can also be the cause of her green-world turning into an alien wilderness. Philip Wheelwright discusses this dual concept of nature:

The typically primitive attitude towards nature is largely a tension between familiarity and watchfulness. The former gives stability and confidence, a feeling of membership, of at-homeness, of being comfortably rooted in Mother Earth. The security of the cave, of the family, and subconsciously perhaps of the womb, supplies the primordial ground-plan of human living. ...But the familiar is not all of life...Man encounters also...the strange; and this readiness in turn has a double aspect. For the strange can alarm and it can fascinate...Where the note of alarm predominates, and where it is not definite enough to arouse the self-preservative instincts by suggesting particular measures of defense...in such cases man's imaginative awareness falls into a primal terror of the strange...¹²

Montgomery, in relating an incident from her own childhood, seems fully aware of the primal overtones:

I cannot tell you just what I was afraid of. I knew there was nothing in the wood worse than

¹²Philip Wheelwright, "Notes on Mythopoeia," Myth and Literature, Contemporary Theory and Practice, John B. Vickery, ed. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. 63.

rabbits or as the all-wise grown-ups told me "worse than yourself." It was just the old, primitive fear handed down to me from ancestors who, in the dawn of time, were afraid of the woods with good reason. With me, it was a blind, unreasoning terror.¹³

Anne's experience with the "Haunted Wood" is a vivid and memorable lesson for her on the dangers of fantasizing too freely about the natural world. Bored with the "common-place" aspect of their surroundings, Anne and Diana imagine that the small spruce wood near Green Gables is haunted with various spirits and "white things." When Marilla insists that Anne walk through it one evening, to prove that her imagination has gone out of control, Anne is utterly terrified:

Anne marched. That is, she stumbled over the bridge and went shuddering up the horrible dim path beyond. Anne never forgot that walk. Bitterly did she repent the license she had given to her imagination. The goblins of her fancy lurked in every shadow about her, reaching out their cold, fleshless hands to grasp the terrified small girl who had called them into being. A white strip of birch bark blowing up from the hollow over the brown floor of the grove made her heart stand still. The long-drawn wail of two old boughs rubbing against each other brought out the perspiration in beads on her forehead.
(A. of G. G., p. 211)

¹³L. M. Montgomery, The Alpine Path, p. 44.

By the time she returns from her walk she has learned that sometimes there are distinct advantages to the everyday world around her: "Oh, Mar-Marilla," chattered Anne, "I'll b-b-be content-t-tented with c-c-commonplace places after this."

(A. of G. G., p. 212)

The incident of the "Haunted Wood" is just one of many learning experiences which Anne undergoes. Her usual pattern of mistakes involves inadvertently offending some older female, and then trying to make atonement for her mistake. She sets Diana drunk, and is not forgiven by Mrs. Barry until she saves the life of her younger daughter. She jumps on the bed where Miss Josephine Barry, Diana's great aunt, is sleeping, but wins the old woman's admiration and interest when she confesses her guilt. Diana's mother and aunt become surrogate mother-figures for Anne; Miss Josephine Barry, who is quite wealthy, is cast in the role of what Elizabeth Waterston terms "hag-guardian." This figure, in Montgomery's books, is a very old woman who considers herself beyond or above the normal social conventions, and who is usually sympathetic towards the heroine; often she plays the part of an elderly fairy godmother. Miss Josephine Barry invites Anne to her mansion in town, and gives her her first pair of pretty slippers when she performs at a concert.

Anne gradually learns how to behave in the real world, learning from her various mistakes and adjusting her attitudes. The new minister's wife, Mrs. Allan, and her teacher, Miss Stacey, help to provide intelligent and sympathetic guidance:

"It's a serious thing to grow up, isn't it Marilla? But when I have such good friends as you and Matthew and Mrs. Allan and Miss Stacey I ought to grow up successfully, and I'm sure it will be my own fault if I don't."

(A. of G. G., p. 322)

Anne recognizes that she is ultimately responsible for the kind of person she becomes, and her most valuable lessons are based, like the "Haunted Wood" incident, on her abortive attempts to escape reality.

When Anne tries to dye her hair black, the result is "...a queer, dull, bronzy green, with streaks here and there of the original red to heighten the ghastly effect." (A. of G. G., p. 275) In trying, and failing, to bring her fantasy into the real world, Anne learns that her original situation was not so terrible:

"Yes, it's green," moaned Anne.
 "I thought nothing could be as bad as red hair. But now I know it's ten times worse to have green hair. Oh, Marilla, you little know how utterly wretched I am."

(A. of G. G., p. 275)

Anne's world of fantasy changes to an alien world when she tries to substitute dream for reality.

This lesson is reinforced when Anne and her friends try to play "Elaine." Anne portrays the virginal lily-maid, floating down the pond on a wooden flat. The flat begins to leak, however, and Anne is forced to climb onto a piling after becoming drenched in the water. The motif of re-birth and baptism is further suggested when Gilbert Blythe rescues her in his boat; the lily maid is confronted with sexual reality:

For a moment Anne hesitated. She had an odd, newly awakened consciousness under all her outraged dignity that the half-shy, half-eager expression in Gilbert's hazel eyes was something that was very good to see. Her heart gave a quick, queer little beat.

(A. of G. G., p. 288)

Anne is still not quite ready for such a total acceptance of reality, however. She refuses Gilbert's offer of friendship, although she admits to Marilla that it is futile to impose romantic fantasy on inescapable reality: "I have come to the conclusion that it is no use trying to be romantic in Avonlea. It was probably easy enough in towered Camelot hundreds of years ago, but romance is not appreciated now."

(A. of G. G., p. 291) Matthew cautions her, however, not to reverse her thinking completely:

"Don't give up all your romance, Anne," he whispered shyly, "a little of it is a good thing -- not too much, of course -- but keep a little of it, Anne, keep a little of it."

(A. of G. G., p. 291)

After the episodes of dying her hair and portraying the lily maid, Anne matures quite rapidly. She prepares for her entrance to teaching academy, and her recitation at a concert for "Yankee millionaires" is favourably received. She senses that as she grows older she will not be able to relate to the world of fantasy as closely as she had as a child:

"But I want to have a real good jolly time this summer, for maybe it's the last summer I'll be a little girl. Mrs. Lynde says that if I keep stretching out next year as I've

done this I'll have to put on longer skirts. She says I'm all running to legs and eyes. And when I put on longer skirts I shall feel that I have to live up to them and be very dignified. It won't even do to believe in fairies then, I'm afraid; so I'm going to believe in them with all my whole heart this summer.

(A. of G. G., p. 316)

Her hair has darkened to a "handsome auburn," signifying the blend of reality with at least some fantasy.

Anne continues to gain the praise and encouragement of the women who represent the real world. When she leads her class, Mrs. Lynde congratulates her heartily:

"I just guess she has done well, and far be it from me to be backward in saying it. You're a credit to your friends, Anne, that's what, and we're all proud of you."

(A. of G. G., p. 337)

Marilla gives Anne a green dress as a token recognition of Anne's growth, and Miss Barry voices her approval of Anne at the latter's graduation ceremony. Matthew, too, helps to reinforce Anne's acceptance of her sexual identity by emphasizing her uniqueness as a girl:

"Well now, I'd rather have you than a dozen boys, Anne," said Matthew patting her hand. "Just mind you that -- rather than a dozen boys. Well now, I guess it wasn't a boy that took the Avery Scholarship, was it? It was a girl -- my girl -- my girl that I'm proud of."

(A. of G. G., p. 376)

By the time Anne has left teaching academy, her concept of self is fairly well established except for her identity as a woman. Montgomery told her correspondent, Ephraim

ber, that if she had realized that she was going to write a sequel to Anne of Green Gables, she would not have "killed Mathew off" in the first book. Her reason for "killing" him she explained, was to create a situation where Anne would make a sacrifice. A second reason, however, would seem to be that the father figure must be replaced by the lover. It is not until after Matthew's death that Anne finally accepts Gilbert's friendship. Matthew's death allows both Anne and Marilla to become more aware of their feelings. Marilla, who gains emotional insight as she is going blind physically, finds that the shock of her brother's death helps to free her powers of expression:

"We've got each other, Anne. I don't know what I'd do if you weren't here -- if you'd never come. Oh, Anne, I know I've been kind of strict and harsh with you maybe -- but you mustn't think I didn't love you as well as Matthew did, for all that. I want to tell you now, when I can. It's never been easy for me to say things out of my heart, but at times like this it's easier. I love you as dear as if you were my own flesh and blood and you've been my joy and comfort ever since you came to Green Gables."

(A. of G. G., pp. 380-81)

Marilla later relates how she and Gilbert's father had once been sweethearts, thus adding another link between herself and Anne.

Anne meets Gilbert on the road as she is coming home from visiting Matthew's grave. The tone of their reconciliation is subdued; their meeting takes place in an autumn dusk, and is a seasonal contrast to Anne's first meeting

with Matthew on a June evening when much of her conversation was about brides. There is an acceptance of fertility, but it is mingled with regret for lost childhood. Anne's sacrifice is partially a compromise on Montgomery's part to keep her heroine within the confines of the hearth for a while longer:

Anne's horizon had closed in since the night she had sat there after coming home from Queen's; but if the path set before her feet was to be narrow she knew that flowers of quiet happiness would bloom along it.

(A. of G. G., p. 396)

There is no great desire as yet to leave her small world or to exchange male friendship for romantic love.

Although Montgomery had not planned a sequel when she wrote Anne of Green Gables, Anne of Avonlea flows very naturally out of the first book. Anne continues to experience some conflict between reality and romance, although she has learned that she cannot live primarily among her fantasies. The two worlds must usually be kept separate, as she realizes when she tries to communicate her fancies about an old, deserted house:

"How lonely and sorrowful it must feel. Perhaps they all come back on moonlit nights...the ghosts of the little children of long ago and the roses and the songs...and for a little while the old house can dream it is young and joyous again."

Diana shook her head.

"I never imagine things like that about places now, Anne. ...Besides, those children aren't dead. They're all grown up and doing well...and one of them is a butcher. And flowers and songs couldn't have ghosts anyhow."

Anne smothered a little sigh. She loved Diana dearly and they had always been good comrades. But she had long ago learned that when she wandered into the realm of fancy she must go alone. The way to it was by an enchanted path where not even her dearest might follow her.¹⁴

Anne has come a good distance on her quest, but she is not yet fully mature. Her somewhat crusty neighbour, A. J. Harrison, takes Matthew's place as a cantankerous, outspoken version of the "wise old man," who observes that Anne is "...too young to be teaching anyhow...far too young and childish." (A. of A., p. 40) Anne still enjoys her world of childhood fantasies, but reserves them now for temporary escapes from adult responsibilities. When Diana catches Anne talking out loud to a tree in the woods, she observes:

"Anne Shirley, you're only pretending to be grown up. I believe when you're alone you're as much a little girl as you ever were."

"Well, one can't get over the habit of being a little girl all at once," said Anne gaily. "You see, I was little for fourteen years and I've only been grown-upish for scarcely three. I'm sure I shall always feel like a

¹⁴L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Avonlea (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Press, 1909), p. 17. All quotations from this novel are from this edition.

child in the woods. These walks home are almost the only time I have for dreaming...I'm so busy with teaching and studying and helping Marilla with the twins that I haven't another moment for imagining things.

(A. of A., p. 96)

The solace of the green world continues to be a strong influence for Anne, but like her imaginative fancies, the world of nature can lose some of its appeal when carried over into a harsher reality. When Anne and her friends find a shimmering pool in the middle of a clearing she tries to share its beauty through a communal ritual:

"Let us dance around it like wood-nymphs," cried Anne, dropping her basket and extending her hands.

But the dance was not a success, for the ground was boggy and Jane's rubbers came off.

"You can't be a wood-nymph if you have to wear rubbers," was her decision.

(A. of A., p. 135)

At the beginning of their expedition through the woods Anne suggests that "Everybody can say just what comes into her head. That is conversation." (A. of A., p. 135), but by the end of the day she has separated herself from the other girls, lost in a private reverie over the beauty around her.

As Anne progresses in her own quest for identity, she guides others along the same path. She helps Marilla to raise Davy and Dora Keith, a set of twins with contrasting personalities who come to live at Green Gables. Dora is prim and proper, and acts as though she had already been brought up, but Davy is continually getting into mischief and questioning Anne

about the workings of the world. Anne is able to guide Davy through many small problems of growing up, but the episodes in which he appears are focused more on comedy than myth.

A more significant relationship emerges between Anne and one of her students, Paul Irving. Paul is a motherless boy whose father has sent him to live with his grandmother while he is going to school. Like Anne, Paul pretends things; he has a group of imaginary playmates who live at the rock shore, and people often think that his fantasies are strange. On the first day of school Anne and Paul recognize their common ground:

...Anne realized that he was unlike other children anywhere, and that there was a soul subtly akin to her own gazing at her out of the very dark blue eyes that were watching her so intently. ...He had a sober, grave, meditative expression, as if his spirit was much older than his body; but when Anne smiled softly at him it vanished in a sudden answering smile, which seemed an illumination of his whole being.. With that quick interchange of smiles Anne and Paul were fast friends forever before a word had passed between them.

(A. of A., p. 44)

Anne becomes a temporary mother figure for Paul, but she really serves as a fairy godmother, finding him a real parent in Miss Lavendar Lewis.

Miss Lavendar, like Paul, represents a part of Anne, and Montgomery. Paul is the sensitive, motherless child, and Miss Lavendar is the maiden lady, childlike in many ways,

who is still waiting for the fulfillment of romantic love.

In reuniting Miss Lavendar with Paul's father, Anne acts as a type of fairy godmother to both, finding a mother for the boy and a lover for the maiden.

Miss Lavendar's girlish ways are stressed over and over by Montgomery. She is described as

...a little lady with snow-white hair beautifully wavy and thick... Beneath it was an almost girlish face, pink cheeked and sweet lipped, with big soft brown eyes and dimples... She wore a very dainty gown of cream muslin with pale-hued roses on it... a gown which would have seemed ridiculously juvenile on most women of her age, but which suited Miss Lavendar so perfectly that you never thought about it at all!

(A. of A., pp. 244-5)

Miss Lavendar lives in a little stone house in the woods, with a young girl who looks like "...a messenger from pixie land." (A. of A., p. 244) Rather than conform to the usual activities of Avonlea spinsters, she prefers to entertain herself with imaginary companions, but she welcomes the friendship of young girls like Anne and Diana. Anne, especially, develops a close relationship with Miss Lavendar due to the similarities of their natures:

Between her and Miss Lavendar had sprung up one of those fervent, helpful friendships possible only between a woman who has kept the freshness of youth in her heart and soul, and a girl whose imagination and intuition supplied the place of experience. Anne had at last discovered a real "kindred spirit,"...

(A. of A., p. 261)

Miss Lavendar's reunion with Mr. Irving is one way in which Anne learns to accept sexual reality, but she tends to view the older lady's romance in terms of a fairy tale, thus softening the aspect of physicality. Her ability to distinguish between fact and fancy is not yet developed in the area of romantic love. Although Miss Lavendar's maid and Marilla both tend to view the affair factually, Anne prefers a more poetic interpretation:

"You see, Prince Charming is coming tonight. He came long ago, but in a foolish moment went away and wandered afar and forgot the secret of the magic pathway to the enchanted castle, where the princess was weeping her faithful heart out for him. But at last he remembered it again and the princess is waiting still... because nobody but her own dear prince could carry her off."

"Oh, Miss Shirley, ma'am, what is that in prose?" gasped the mystified Charlotta.

Anne laughed.

"In prose, an old friend of Miss Lavendar's is coming to see her tonight."

(A. of A., p. 342)

The acceptance of sexuality is thus doubly removed from reality; Anne adds her own distancing of fairy tale to Montgomery's personal mythical pattern of delayed physical awareness.

Anne does not view Diana Barry's romance in the same terms as she sees Miss Lavendar's. The reality of sexuality is much closer to home when her best friend becomes engaged, and Anne is disappointed in the prosaic details of Diana's

romance:

"Things are changing so fast it almost frightens me," Anne thought, a little sadly. "And I'm afraid that this can't help making some difference between Diane and me. I'm sure I can't tell her all my secrets after this...she might tell Fred. And what can she see in Fred? He's very nice and jolly...but he's just Fred Wright."

(A. of A., p. 352)

Besides the implied anxiety that her own impending sexual fulfillment will probably follow Diana's, there is a sense of betrayal that the maiden with whom Anne has sworn vows of "eternal friendship" has abandoned their chaste sisterhood.

The romances of Diana and Miss Lavendar both help Anne to come closer to a clear realization of the meaning of sexual love. After Miss Lavendar's wedding Anne and Gilbert discuss the romance, Gilbert pointing out that Miss Lavendar and Mr. Irving would have had even more happiness if their marriage had taken place before their years spent apart:

"...wouldn't it have been more beautiful still, Anne, if there had been no separation or misunderstanding...if they had come hand in hand all the way through life, with no memories behind them but those which belonged to each other?

(A. of A., p. 366)

Anne's realization of what sexual love really means is greater than it was at the end of Anne of Green Gables; she has taken another step toward the true perception of that aspect of maturity:

For a moment Anne's heart fluttered queerly and for the

first time her eyes faltered under Gilbert's gaze...It was as if a veil had been lifted, giving to her view a revelation of unsuspected feelings and realities. Perhaps...romance did not come into one's life with pomp and blare...perhaps it crept to one's side like an old friend through quiet ways...perhaps...love unfolded naturally out of a beautiful friendship, as a golden hearted rose slipping from its green sheath.

Then the veil dropped again; but the Anne who walked up the dark lane was not quite the same Anne who had driven gaily down it the evening before. The page of girlhood had been turned... and the page of womanhood was before her...

(A. of A., pp. 366-7)

As in the previous book, however, Anne's acceptance of love takes place at dusk, in autumn; the moment of total sexual awareness is delayed once again.

The final acceptance of mature love is not reached until the very end of the third book about Anne, which covers her experiences in college. The fantasies and realities of romance is the central theme in Anne of the Island; the romances of secondary and minor characters are used as variations on Anne's love affair with Gilbert Blythe. When Anne begins her freshman year at Redmond College she is still dreaming of a mysterious melancholy hero, but her experiences finally show her that real love is not a matter of glamorous looks and courtly manners. On her first day at school she meets Phillipa Gordon whose attitude about men, although it seems more frivolous, is really no less

misguided than Anne's:

"The boys like me awfully -- they really do. But there were only two that mattered. The rest were all too young and too poor I must marry a rich man, you know."¹⁵

Phillipa, or Phil as she is called, provides an important test case when she falls in love, and becomes engaged to a rather homely divinity student named Jonas. Phil is the most fully realized of Anne's friends in the book, and her acceptance of a mature, non-idealistic relationship with a man prefigures Anne's own realization that Gilbert is the right person to marry:

"But Jonas knows the real me and loves me, frivolity and all. And I love him. I never was so surprised in my life as I was when I found out I loved him. I'd never thought it possible to fall in love with an ugly man. ... And one named Jonas! But I mean to call him Jo.

(A. of I., p. 230)

Elizabeth Waterston notes that Montgomery often uses unisex names for her character: "The theory would be that reading such tales gives young girls an outlet for their fantasies of changing sex."¹⁶ Here, the ambivalent use of names such as Phil and Jo helps to soften the impact of sexuality.

Anne has several distasteful brushes with reality when

¹⁵L. M. Montgomery, Anne of the Island (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Press, 1915), p. 41. All quotations from this novel are from this edition.

¹⁶Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 219.

she experiences her first two marriage proposals. Charlie Sloane, a youth she went to school with, angers her by his insensitive reaction to her refusal, but when her friend Jane proposes to her for her rather slow-witted brother, Billy, Anne views the incident as merely ludicrous, although it contains a hint of disillusionment:

Anne knew quite well wherein the sting consisted though she did not put it into words. She had had her secret dreams of the first time some one should ask her the great question. And it had, in those dreams, always been very romantic and beautiful... And now, this thrilling experience had turned out to be merely grotesque. Billy Andrews had got his sister to propose for him because his father had given him the upper farm; and if Anne wouldn't "have him" Nettie Blewett would. There was romance for you, with a vengeance.

(A. of I., p. 82)

Anne tries to embody her idealistic notions of romance in a short story called "Averil's Atonement," but, as Mr. Harrison points out, the story is too removed from "real life":

"But your folks ain't like real folks anywhere. They talk too much and use too high-flown language. There's one place where that Dalrymple chap talks even on for two pages and never lets the girl get a word in edgewise. If he'd done that in real life she'd have pitched him."

(A. of I., p. 120)

"Averil's Atonement" is rejected by the publishers, but it wins first prize when Diana decides to send in a copy to a

contest sponsored by a baking powder company. Such a prosaic fate for her ideals seems like sacrilege to Anne; she still wishes to retain her romantic fantasies.

A variety of incidents contribute to Anne's gradual acceptance of maturity. Diana marries, and another old chum, Ruby Gillis, dies with the regret that she will never experience the happiness of a husband and children. Ruby's attitude towards men had always been flirtatious and superficial, but as she approaches death her values become more basic:

"...poor Herb -- he-he loves me
and I love him, Anne. The others
meant nothing to me, but he does
-- and if I could live I would be
his wife and be so happy."

(A. of I., p. 142)

The incident of Ruby's death is complex; on one level it is a lesson for Anne in learning to appreciate real love while she has the opportunity, but it might also represent a desire to avoid consummation by killing off the sensual Ruby. At least one maiden will remain forever virginal.

Half way through the book Gilbert proposes to Anne in an orchard where there remain traces of snow as well as patches of new grass. She refuses him, and feels a great sense of loss because they can no longer be close friends. When she tells Phillipa that she is not going to marry Gilbert, Phil scolds Anne for her lack of perception:

"You don't know love when you
see it. You've tricked something
out with your imagination that
you think love, and you expect
the real thing to look like that."

There, that's the first sensible
thing I've ever said in my life.
I wonder how I managed it."

(A. of I., p. 190).

Phil's speech is a sign that her own attitude is changing; several months later she meets Jonas, and is able to recognize that she loves him, although he isn't rich or handsome. It takes Anne two more years before she realizes the truth of Phillipa's remarks.

Anne and Phil were both born in Nova Scotia, and Anne is able to visit the home in which she was born while staying with her friend. The woman who now lives in Anne's former home is able to tell her a few details about her parents, and she hands over a packet of letters written by her mother and father. Anne's sense of identity nears completion after this encounter with her past:

"This has been the most beautiful day of my life," Anne said to Phil that night. "I've found my father and mother. Those letters have made them real to me. I'm not an orphan any longer."

(A. of I., p. 195)

Perhaps this sense of her past is necessary to Anne before she can consider accepting any proposal.

When she returns to college in the fall she meets a man who seems to conform to her ideal in every respect. His name is Royal Gardener, and Anne is infatuated with him at first glance:

Anne looked up. Tall and handsome and distinguished-looking—dark, melancholy, inscrutable eyes -- melting, musical, sympathetic voice -- yes, the very hero of her dreams

stood before her in the flesh.
He could not have more closely
resembled her ideal if he had
been made to order.

(A. I., p. 218)

Anne and Roy see each other steadily for the next two years, and she does her best to convince herself that he is really right for her, although something seems lacking in their relationship:

She was deeply in love with Roy. True, it was not just what she had imagined love to be. But was anything in life, Anne asked herself wearily, like one's imagination of it? ... But Roy was a dear fellow and they would be very happy together, even if some indefinable zest was missing out of life.

(A. of I., p. 298)

Anne refuses Royal's proposal of marriage, however, realizing that he doesn't really belong in her life; but she does not yet understand that Gilbert is right for her.

Many minor incidents in the final chapters of the book prefigure Anne's acceptance of Gilbert. Phillipa and Jonas marry, and even plain Jane Andrews finds a middle-aged, millionaire husband. The cherry tree outside Anne's window, which she had named the Snow Queen, has blown down, and Paul Irving, Anne's old pupil, discovers that he can no longer communicate with his imaginary rock people. Anne tells him that "You have grown too old for the Rock People. They like only children for playfellows...You must pay the penalty of growing up, Paul. You must leave fairyland behind you."

(A. of I., p. 204) Anne witnesses the romance of her land-

lady, Janet Sweet, while substitute-teaching in a neighbouring village. Janet, a middle-aged spinster, is finally able to marry the man who has been calling on her for twenty years, once his mother dies, releasing him from a promise never to marry. Besides the repetition of the theme of delayed fruition, there is also the concept of the female thwarting the marriage; only here it is a mother figure, instead of the maiden herself.

Anne does not realize that she loves Gilbert until he is in great danger of dying. The circumstances seem somewhat melodramatic and contrived, but as Elizabeth Waterston observes, "...such a resolution is acceptable in myth; and once again L. M. Montgomery had released mythic energies in the story she had created. She had prepared for such a super-natural experience of miracle by the recurring use of symbolic settings, suggestive of Eden."¹⁷

Anne finally accepts Gilbert in an old garden hidden away in the woods. The time once again is autumn, and the tone is one of subdued happiness. She wears a green dress, symbolic of growth and renewal, although the fact that they must wait three years before they marry once again delays the actual encounter with physical reality. There is a mixture of joy and nostalgia in the closing image:

Then they walked home together
in the dusk...along winding
paths fringed with the sweetest
flowers that ever bloomed, and

¹⁷Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 208.

over haunted meadows where winds
of hope and memory blew.

(A. of I., p. 326)

Anne's quest for identity really closes in the third book with her acceptance of herself as a woman, emotionally and physically. The subsequent Anne books add nothing important to her own character, although there are repetitions of significant mythical patterns. Anne of Windy Poplars covers the three years that Anne teaches in Summerside while waiting to be married. She is kept safely by three old women and boards in a "tower" room. Anne's function in the book is mainly as a fairy godmother once again. Since she has accepted love into her own life, she now helps to bring about other matches, and she becomes the means of reuniting a lonely little girl with her estranged father.

"Little Elizabeth" is yet another version of the motherless child whose father has sent her home to live with a grandmother. In this case the woman who cares for Elizabeth is a grim, unloving great-grandmother, who blames the child for her mother's death. The atmosphere in which she is raised is one of gloom and repression.

"I remembered Elizabeth had never laughed once during our talk. I feel that she hasn't learned how. The great house is so still and lonely and laughterless. It looks dull and gloomy even now when the world is a riot of autumn color. Little Elizabeth is doing too much listening to lost whispers."¹⁸

¹⁸L. M. Montgomery, Anne of Windy Poplars (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1933), pp. 38-39. All quotations from this novel are taken from this edition.

Elizabeth, like Montgomery, pretends to be more than one person, using the many variations on her name as separate personalities, and she, too, longs for her absent father:

"Sometimes we watch the ships coming up the harbor before a fair wind, over a glistening pathway, through the transparent spring air, and Elizabeth wonders if her father may be on board one of them. She clings to the hope that he may come some day. I can't imagine why he doesn't. I'm sure he would if he knew what a darling little daughter he has here longing for him."

(A. of W. P., p. 100)

Anne finally writes to Elizabeth's father and the little girl meets him while visiting on an island called Flying Cloud. The whole atmosphere of the meeting is one of fantasy; Montgomery stages the fulfillment of a dream in an idyllic island-within-an-island setting.

Anne and Gilbert finally marry in Anne's House of Dreams. The wedding takes place, naturally, in the autumn, and the evening before the ceremony Anne once again meets Gilbert as she is leaving Matthew's grave:

"History repeats itself," said Gilbert, joining her as she passed the Blythe gate. "Do you remember our first walk down this hill, Anne -- our first walk together anywhere, for that matter?"

"I was coming home in the twilight from Matthew's grave -- and you came out of the gate; and I swallowed the pride of years and spoke to you."¹⁹

¹⁹L. M. Montgomery, Anne's House of Dreams (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1922), p.22.

Through this small ritual, the replacement of the father-figure by the lover is reaffirmed, as Anne leaves her girlhood behind her.

Anne and Gilbert do not settle in Avonlea; the home of their childhood is left behind for a busier, less sheltered environment:

There was a certain tang of romance and adventure in the atmosphere of their new home which Anne had never found in Avonlea. ...The ways of Four Winds were less staid and settled and grooved than those of Avonlea; winds of change blew over them; the sea called even to the dwellers on shore...

(A. H. of D., pp. 52-3)

The natural world is somewhat changed, but the people who surround Anne in her new life seem to create another family environment for her. Old Captain Jim becomes a father-figure who is as fully realized as Matthew, and Anne names her first son after both men. A middle-aged housekeeper with the comfortable name of Susan Baker takes on most of the household duties, leaving Anne free to concentrate on raising a family. A neighbour and friend is Miss Cornelia Bryant, a spinster who marries late in life and eventually raises another orphan girl, Mary Vance.

The chief interest in the final three Anne books lies with the Blythe children and their friends, the minister's family. Rainbow Valley centers on the motherless Meredith children whose father is a kind but absent-minded minister. Anne of Ingleside relates various adventures of

Anne's own children, but the only mythic strain lies in the children's names; besides James Matthew, she has a son named Walter Cuthbert, who later dies like Anne's own father, and a son named Shirley who is never very fully realized, perhaps because Anne's sense of her own family roots are not as strong as the ones from her adopted family. Anne has twin daughters, named Anne and Diana, although they are called Nan and Di. Perhaps in fulfillment of a wish to escape the red hair, Anne calls the red-headed twin Diana, and the prettier brunette becomes her own namesake. The youngest daughter, Bertha Marilla, adopts a war baby named James in the final book, Rilla of Ingleside.

The final "Anne" books lack the mythic vitality present in the earlier ones, and none of them are as memorable as Anne of Green Gables. Montgomery was at her best when recording the experiences of the child, and she felt that the sequel to her first book was constructed; it did not grow naturally. The subsequent "Anne" books were written to satisfy the demands of her publishers and reading public, but Montgomery's artistic instincts were correct when she declared that "I want to leave 'Anne' just as she is forever: in her girlhood."²⁰

²⁰Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, p. 85.

The "Story Girl" Books

Montgomery's desire to preserve the world of childhood was fulfilled when she wrote The Story Girl and The Golden Road. Together, they form, as Elizabeth Waterston has observed, an "elegy on childhood,"¹ and The Story Girl always remained Montgomery's favourite among her books. Both books conform to Frye's criterion that romance is by nature nostalgic:

The perennially childlike quality of romance is marked by its extraordinarily persistent nostalgia, its search for some kind of imaginative golden age in time or space.²

Written in a tone of fond reminiscence by a narrator with an ambivalent name, Beverly King, the books succeed in preserving the "golden age" of childhood:

We may long have left the golden road behind, but its memories are the dearest of our eternal possessions; and those who cherish them as such may haply find a pleasure in the pages of this book, whose people are pilgrims on the golden road of youth.³

¹Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 207.

²Northrop Frye, The Anatomy of Criticism, p. 186.

³L. M. Montgomery, The Golden Road, "Foreward," (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1910), p. VII. All quotations from this novel are taken from this edition.

The two books take place roughly within the cycle of a year, and the relationship between the rituals of the children and the natural world around them contributes to the mythic quality of the novels:

A literature, we said, has a lot to do with identifying the human world with the natural world around it, or finding analogies between them. In nature the most obvious or recurring feature is the cycle. ... Human life goes from childhood to death and back again in a new birth.⁴

Montgomery's books follow a seasonal cycle: The Story Girl opens in spring when the two King boys arrive on the Island farm, and The Golden Road ends in autumn with their departure, but there is no rebirth. Childhood memories are preserved intact, but the tone is elegiac; once one has grown up and left the Island and youth, there is no real return to Springtime.

The quest theme is present in The Story Girl and The Golden Road, although it is not as predominant as in Montgomery's other novels because the emphasis is on preservation of childhood rather than development and growth. Within the confines of the main theme, however, the children, especially the heroine, Sarah Stanley, undergo various learning experiences, generally based on some sort of disillusionment of a childhood ideal. It is a less fully

⁴Northrop Frye, The Educated Imagination, pp. 18-19.

realized variation on the theme of fantasy and reality present in Anne of Green Gables; the story stays more within the carefree realm of childhood.

The books relate the adventures of a group of cousins who live on neighbouring farms. Felicity, Dan, and Cecily King live with their parents on the old King homestead, and their cousin, Sara Stanley, lives with an aunt and uncle nearby. Two more cousins, Bev and Felix King, come from Toronto to stay at the King Farm while their father fulfils an engineering contract in South America. Peter Craig, a hired boy, and Sarah Ray, a tearful, repressed youngster whose temperament seems very similar to Montgomery's imaginary Lucy Gray, share in most of the cousins' experiences.

Sarah Stanley's mother is dead, and her father is an artist who lives in Europe. Bev and Felix's mother is also dead, and their father is in South America; even Peter Craig's father has deserted his wife and son. The desire for the return of the father is thus reworked several times in these books:

The host of fatherless children who rise from her pages treasuring their memories of a lost and idealized parent may reflect a subconscious resentment that her father had been lost to her by his own act: had, in effect, deserted her and denied her the security she clearly wanted and needed by removing himself from her life...⁵

⁵Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, p. 36.

By the end of the second book, all three fathers have returned to their children, but in the cases of Sara, and Beverly and Felix, return of the father means exile from the Island, so that a reunion would be bittersweet.

Montgomery may have been identifying here with her own experience of living with her father for a year out west, and perhaps remembering her extreme homesickness for Cavendish.

The King orchard is the favourite meeting place for the children; in winter the kitchen, another symbol of the mother, becomes their special haunt. The orchard takes on, even more of a nurturing aspect because its trees are all named after family and friends:

Grandfather King was in no hurry. He did not set his whole orchard out at once, for he wished it to grow with his life and history, and be bound up with all of good and joy that should come to his household. ...They had fourteen children in all, and each child had its "birth tree." Every family festival was commemorated in like fashion...So it came to pass that every tree in it was a fair green monument to some love or delight of the vanished years.⁶

Unlike the "Anne" books, there is a great sense of family and tradition in The Story Girl and The Golden Road, and playing among trees named for their aunts and parents and close family friends gives the children an added sense of

⁶L. M. Montgomery, The Story Girl (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1910), pp. 13-14. All quotations from this novel are from this edition.

security and contentment. The orchard was the place where the previous generation had played as well, and its atmosphere can still transform the somewhat unsympathetic grown-ups into more likeable companions:

Presently, also, the laughter of the grown-ups mingled with ours. Aunt Olivia and Uncle Roger, Aunt Janet and Uncle Alec, came strolling through the orchard and joined our circle, as they sometimes did when the toil of the day was over.... 'Twas then we liked our grown-ups best, for they seemed half children again.

(S. G., pp. 250-1).

Outside of the orchard the grown-ups are looked upon with some misgivings by the children. Although the adults are all well-meaning and sympathetic in varying degrees towards the children's hopes and anxieties, none of them can totally understand the world of childhood simply because they are no longer travelling on the "golden road" of youth. Montgomery emphasizes the gap between childhood and those who are forever exiled from the world of fantasy:

There is such a place as fairyland -- but only children can find the way to it. And they do not know that it is fairyland until they have grown so old that they forget the way. One bitter day, when they seek it and cannot find it, they realized what they have lost; and that is the tragedy of life. On that day the gates of Eden are shut behind them and the age of gold is over.

(S. G., pp. 165-6).

The only adults who can totally communicate with the children are those who live somewhat apart from the reality of the common world. Jasper Dale, or "The Awkward Man,"

as the children call him, is a figure of the "wise old man" for Sarah Stanley. The Awkward Man, who is too shy to mingle in society, writes poetry and lives alone in a house called Golden Milestone where there is a mysterious room decorated for an unknown lady named Alice. Once the Story Girl has become acquainted with him he tells her tales and gives her books, thus encouraging her in her vocation as an actress and storyteller.

The figure of the hag guardian in the two books is the unlikely one of Peg Bowen. Like Anne's Miss Josephine Barry, Peg is old and does several favours for the heroine, but Peg is a rather strange, irresponsible gypsy who is beyond the pale of respectability:

"She's very queer. She lives there with a lot of pet animals in winter, and in summer she roams over the country and begs her meals. They say she is crazy. ...Peter Craig says she is a witch...But I don't believe that. Witches are so scarce nowadays."

(S. G., p. 20)

Peg Bowen may not be a witch, but she grants some strange favours to the children. When the Story Girl's cat, Paddy, becomes ill, the children fear that Peg has put a curse on him and leave the old woman an assortment of presents to cure their pet. Peg later gives Cecily a wish-bone which is supposed to have magical powers and Cecily uses it to wish for Paddy when he has been lost for over a week. The bond of the cat, (another mother symbol) who is twice "saved" by Peg, is one link between her and the Story

Girl; another common trait is their love of the natural world. Peg roams all over the country during the summer, with bare feet and hair streaming down her back. Sarah shares with Peg the same feeling of harmony and freedom of the outdoors:

The Story Girl was barefooted and barearmed, having rolled the sleeves of her pink gingham up to her shoulders. Around her waist was twisted a girdle of the blood-red roses that bloomed in Aunt Olivia's garden; on her sleek curls she wore a chaplet of them; and her hands were full of them.

(S. G., p. 183)

Like Peg, Sarah is different from the normal inhabitants of the village. She receives her strongest sense of identity from her dramatic abilities, preferring to be called the Story Girl instead of Sarah, which she might identify with the piteous Sarah Ray. The Story Girl is a keeper of the Sacred Fire, less influenced by matriarchal principles than by the desire to fulfill the quest of a career, and follows the tradition of her artist father. Sarah's practical farmer relatives, like Montgomery's maternal grandparents, view the absent father with distrust:

We felt then, what we did not understand till later years, that our grown-up relatives did not altogether admire or approve of Uncle Blair. He belonged to a different world from theirs. They had never known him intimately or understood him.

(S. G., p. 77)

The Story Girl always remains loyal to her father, despite the veiled disapproval of her relatives; she is much more

strongly influenced by male characters in the two books. The typical mother types such as Aunt Janet, and Sarah's domestically inclined cousin Felicity, are portrayed as well-meaning but rather dense individuals. Sarah is eager to learn how to cook like Felicity, but after inadvertently making a pudding with sawdust she decides to remain true to her real vocation.

The children, as a group, experience various disillusionments, usually through misplaced trust in some authority. Desirous of knowing what God looks like, they buy a picture of Him from a schoolmate, and are horrified at the countenance of a stern, bearded old man. Their minister explains that the picture is not of God, but none of the children will ever be able to imagine God as anyone but the person in that picture. Another unsettling experience, based on an incident from Montgomery's childhood, is the belief in a headline predicting that the next Sunday would be the Day of Judgement. The children's terror is very real, but none of the adults are able to take their fears seriously:

If there had been one wise older friend to tell us, in serious fashion, that we need not be afraid, that the Enterprise paragraph was naught save the idle report of a deluded fanatic, it would have been well for us. But there was not. Our grown-ups, instead, considered our terror an exquisite jest.

(S. G., p. 210)

The lack of sympathetic adults enhances the exclusiveness of the children's world; it becomes a quasi-Neverland

where youth solves its own problems, unhampered by bothersome adults. Felicity, who makes delectable turnovers and tarts, is acceptable as a nurturing figure, and the Story Girl's tales of myth and adventure teach and entertain the other children. Adults occasionally intervene, even Peg Bowen comes to the rescue by sheltering the children in her weird shack during a snowstorm, but whenever possible the children attempt to handle situations on their own terms. They run their own newspaper, keep house while their relatives are away, and the Story Girl even punishes herself for enticing Sarah Ray to disobey her mother and attend a magic lantern show. Sara Ray's mother is an example of the unsympathetic adult

Peg Bowen and The Awkward Man, as adults who remain nearer the world of children, each undergo a change which brings them closer to the everyday world. Peg makes a visit to church, her legs and arms liberally powdered with flour, and proceeds to make loud, disparaging remarks about various members of the congregation. She leaves half way through the service, disgusted with the hypocrisy of her neighbours, but her attendance at church makes her status as a witch seem less probable, and it is a link with respectability. Jasper Dale, who has spent years loving a woman of his imagination, meets a real-life version of the woman in the new music teacher, whom he eventually marries. He begins to appear at social functions and relinquishes his hermit-like existence. Peg and Jasper Dale, like the children who

must eventually grow up, both come a little closer to the author's conception of the world of adult reality.

A third adult who greatly interests the childrer is Rachel Ward, a Montreal cousin whose old blue trunk full of wedding things is kept in the King kitchen. At the end of The Story Girl, the family receives word that Rachel Ward is dead, and that her trunk is to be opened at last. The incident is once again based on a similar episode from Montgomery's own childhood, but it is significant that Rachel, whose young man left her shortly before they were to be married, is a victim of misplaced trust, just as the children have often been themselves. They can truly identify with her pain and they seem to be genuinely sensitive to the details of her story. It is interesting that Montgomery chose to use the incident in the Story Girl books where there is such a strong desire to preserve the past intact.

The desire to preserve childhood forever is probably the reason for the foreshadowing of Cecily's death from consumption. She is portrayed throughout the books as somewhat more spiritual than the other children, and often influences them in their behavior. Near the end of The Golden Road, Sarah Stanley makes predictions about all her friends, except Cecily:

Did she realize in a flash of prescience that there was no earthly future for our sweet Cecily? Not for her were to be the lengthening shadows on the fading garland. The end

was to come while the rainbow
 still sparkled on her wine of
 life, ere a single petal had
 fallen from her rose of joy.
 Long life was before all the
 others who trysted that night
 in the old homestead orchard;
 but Cecily's maiden feet were
 never to leave the golden road.

(G. R., p. 350)

The use of such words as "wine" and "rose" could have sexual implications, indicating, perhaps, that Cecily is too pure to undergo any physical maturation. She retains her enviable status as a child and a maiden permanently.

The language of the two books is noticeably formal and often relies on rather ornate poetic diction, but because Montgomery is identifying the world of childhood with story-book and myth, antiquated phrases such as "it came to pass", and words like "twixt", and "'twas" can be forgiven because they seem to be part of the language of fairytale. Many of the Story Girl's tales serve to enhance the atmosphere of myth surrounding the children. She has a marked talent for making her stories live so that myth and reality become mingled:

Only in the frosty dusk did we
 have time to wander afar in realms
 of gold with the Story Girl. She
 had recently been digging into a
 couple of old volumes of classic
 myths and northland folklore which
 she had found in Aunt Olivia's
 attic, and for us, god and goddess,
 laughing nymph and mocking satyr,
 norn and valkyrie, elf and troll,
 and "green folk" generally, were
 real creatures once again, inhabiting
 the orchards and woods and
 meadows around us, until it seemed
 as if the Golden Age had returned

to earth.

(S. G., p. 319)

The mixture of myth and reality is well balanced in the two books. The elevated tone and nostalgic reminiscences are interspersed with incidents of humour and harmless adventure, just as the Story Girl's tales include anecdotes of neighbouring families as well as stories of myth and romance. Such a blending enhances the mythical patterns by placing them next to the contrasting world of reality, fulfilling Frye's requirement that the archetypal aspects of literature "...tries not only to illustrate the fulfillment of desire, but to define the obstacles to it."⁷ The world of reality is not as harsh in The Story Girl and The Golden Road as it appears in other Montgomery novels, but by pointing out its contrast to the more mythical strains, Montgomery is able to heighten the sense of irrevocable loss when the world of childhood is left behind.

All the missing fathers come back by the end of the second book, and, although the children welcome their return, there is a definite feeling of sadness at leaving the scenes of their youth. Their return is predicted by Cecily in a dream:

As a matter of fact, however,
Cecily dreamed that night that
she saw three full moons in the
sky, and wakened up crying with
the horror of it.

(G. R., p. 53)

⁷ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, p. 106.

The dream is especially interesting because the moon is usually a symbol for the mother. Montgomery's heroines usually long for the return of the father, but some of those desires might actually be a subconscious wish for the mother's return. The return of the father takes the child away from the nurturing orchard, and back into the adult world. One cannot remain loyal to both the Physical Hearth and the Sacred Fire, which is a cause for regret:

We went out of the old orchard
where the autumn wind was beginning
to make its weird music in the russet
boughs, and shut the little gates
behind us. Our revels there were
ended.

(G. R., p. 365)

This echo of Prospero's words in The Tempest reinforces the magical aspect of the orchard and the Island in general, and leaves the reader with a sense of nostalgia. The King children must become exiled from the Golden Road, and can only really return through their memories, but Montgomery was able to enhance her own remembrances by writing about them. As Mollie Gillen notes: "She writes often like a woman thrust out of Eden."⁸ Through her art, Montgomery is able to at least temporarily regain that Edenic vision.

⁸Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, p. 37.

The "Emily" Books

The mythical patterns introduced by Montgomery in her earlier works are developed with significant variations in the "Emily" books, the most autobiographical of her novels.

Anne and Emily share many common traits:

Both are orphans, both are pert, attractive, highly articulate children with a strong awareness of individuality, both strongly imaginative, both passionate in their responses. Both are in the hands of authoritarian guardians and under compulsions that often run counter to their inclinations and to their well-developed sense of what is "fair".¹

Emily is not, however, simply a weaker variant of Anne Shirley's character. The two girls may share certain archetypal similarities, but the focus of the myth takes a different direction in Emily's story. Logan and French consider Emily to be sufficiently different from Anne. They observe:

In Emily of New Moon (1923) Miss Montgomery created a new child character, with a new environment, new conditions, and a new group of minor personages, yet in effect it is of the same type and in the same literary field as her previous novels. The

¹ Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, p. 133.

chief difference to be observed is that she employs a more analytic psychological method in depicting her heroine -- a method that tends to produce an adult's story of youth.²

Emily and Anne may be the same "type", but they are separate individuals, which is evident from the different directions of their quests. The main emphasis in the "Anne" books is on the need to be accepted socially and on the gradual awareness of mature, physical love. Emily's quest is one of artistic acceptance and, although she marries rather late in life, she recognizes and accepts her attraction to Teddy Kent while she is still a young girl. In some ways Emily more closely resembles Sarah Stanley; each girl is fiercely loyal to her artist father and attempts to keep the Sacred Fire burning by following in his footsteps. Creative ability, which is only a minor theme with Anne, becomes of central importance with Emily. Her growth as an individual becomes closely associated with her development as an artist: "The story is an intriguing though unpretentious version of Wordsworth's Prelude, a careful recreation of those 'spots of time' in which the creative imagination is nurtured. It clarifies the directions of a growing child's fantasy-life."³

²J. D. Logan and Donald G. French, Highways of Canadian Literature, A Synoptic Introduction to the Literary History of Canada (English) from 1764 to 1924 (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1924), pp. 301-302.

³Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 212.

Nature plays an important part in Emily's growth as a person and as an artist. Her perception and appreciation of natural beauty is so keenly developed that she sometimes experiences a moment of transcendental awareness which she calls "the flash":

It had always seemed to Emily, ever since she could remember, that she was very, very near to a world of wonderful beauty. Between it and herself hung only a thin curtain; she could never draw the curtain aside -- but sometimes, just for a moment, a wind fluttered it and then it was as if she caught a glimpse of the enchanted realm beyond -- only a glimpse -- and heard a note of unearthly music. This moment came rarely -- went swiftly, leaving her breathless with the inexpressible delight of it. She could never recall it -- never summon it -- never pretend it; but the wonder of it stayed with her for days.⁴

Emily's first home, situated in Maywood, seems almost an extension of the greenworld:

It was situated in a grassy little dale, looking as if it had never been built like other houses but had grown up there like a big, brown mushroom. It was reached by a long, green lane and almost hidden from view by

⁴ L. M. Montgomery, Emily of New Moon (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 1923 p. 7. All quotations from the novel are taken from this edition.

an encircling growth of young
birches.

(E. of N. M., p. 1)

She peoples her world with personifications of nature, naming the various trees, and enjoying a special friendship with the Wind Woman, who changes her appearance and temperament according to the wind's intensity. It is interesting that Emily views the traditionally "male" wind as a figure of female power. Besides the obvious desire for some kind of relationship with a mother figure, there may also be the conception of the Wind Woman as symbolic of creative ability with which she would strongly identify.

Emily does not see herself in the typically passive role of the female. When she reads The Pilgrim's Progress, she is always much more interested in the adventures of Christian than in those of Christiana: "She had not half the fascination of that solitary, intrepid figure who faced all alone the shadows of the Dark Valley and the encounter with Apollyon." (E. of N. M., p. 3) Emily, as a keeper of the Sacred Fire, is influenced more by male encouragement than by females, who are usually either uninterested in or unsympathetic towards her goals.

Emily's father, who dies shortly after the book begins, is her chief inspiration and example. While he is alive, he encourages her in the sketches and the "biographies" that she writes, and after his death Emily finds solace in writing out her troubles in long letters to him. The many father-figures whom Emily encounters are all sympathetic towards her writing, while females, especially her Aunt

Elizabeth, tend to block her literary ambitions. Elizabeth causes Emily to burn the account book where she has written various descriptions and dialogues; her Cousin Jimmy buys her blank books in which to write.

Cousin Jimmy is another of the "wise old man" figures, and he has an aura of fantasy about him:

He had a little, rosy, elfish face with a forked grey beard; his hair curled over his head in a most un-Murray like mop of glossy brown; and his large brown eyes were as kind and frank as a child's.

(E. of N. M., p. 28)

Cousin Jimmy lives at New Moon with Elizabeth and Laura, and his eyes have a childlike appearance because his mind has never completely developed. As children, he and Elizabeth quarrelled, and she accidentally pushed him down the well. This symbolic return to the womb resulted in his always remaining something of a "child," and reinforces Elizabeth's role as a blocking figure for both Jimmy and Emily. Jimmy understands Emily's desire to write, for he himself composes poetry which he "keeps in his head" rather than writing it down, and he provides an appreciative, though not sufficiently critical audience for Emily's own creative attempts.

Like Matthew, Cousin Jimmy often helps the heroine to solve her problems, as Jung suggests:

...often the old man in fairytales asks questions like who? why? whence? and whither? for the purpose of self-reflection and mobilizing the moral forces, and more often still he

gives the magic talisman, the unexpected and improbable power to succeed...⁵

Encouraging Emily to figure out solutions to her problems by asking questions helps her to mature as a writer as well as an individual, and it is Jimmy who suggests that Emily continue to search for the Lost Diamond, a ring that was dropped years ago in their summer house. The Lost Diamond can be viewed as a talisman, since its recovery is associated with Emily's first published novel. Cousin Jimmy seems instinctively aware that it has a kind of power:

"The ~~Lost~~ Diamond will bring you luck Emily," said Cousin Jimmy. "I'm glad they've left it with you. It's rightly yours. But will you let me hold it sometimes, Emily, -- just hold it and look into it? When I look into anything like that I-I find myself. I'm not simple Jimmy Murray then -- I'm what I would have been if I hadn't been pushed into a well."⁶

Cousin Jimmy recognizes that the true magic lies in the object's beauty, and that an appreciation of such beauty is vital to the awareness of the artist. His childlike quality is that of the seer, not the simpleton.

Cousin Jimmy only recites his poetry at certain times

⁵ C. G. Jung, The Collected Works, Vol. 9, Part I, p. 220.

⁶ L. M. Montgomery, Emily's Quest (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1927), p. 163. All quotations from the novel are taken from this edition.

when he senses that the setting is appropriate. Often these occasions occur in the autumn evenings, while he is boiling potatoes for the pigs, with Emily and her friends sharing in the magic all around them:

...sometimes he stirred the potatoes with a long pole, looking, with his queer, forked grey beard and belted "jumper," just like some old gnome or troll of northland story mixing the contents of a magic caldron... and sometimes Teddy lay sprawled out on the ground beside the big pot and drew pictures by the light of the fire...pictures of Ilse and Emily dancing hand in hand around it like two small witches...pictures of weird vague faces crowding in the darkness outside their enchanted circle.

(E. of N. M., pp. 147-49)

Cousin Jimmy helps to create an almost magical atmosphere that stimulates creativity. Teddy draws, Emily experiences the "flash," and "Ilse would recite too, doing better there than she ever did anywhere else..." (E. of N. M., p. 149).

Another of Emily's "fairy godfathers" is Old Kelly, the Irish tin peddler, who brings her gifts of a kitten and a looking-glass and tries to advise her about "beaus." Old Kelly has a certain air of glamour and adventure about him which stirs Emily's imagination:

Emily hankered secretly for a ride in Old Kelly's wagon. She thought it must be very delightful. ...He always had a little three-cornered paper bag of "lemon drops" for her, or a candy stick of many colours, which he smuggled into her pocket when Aunt Elizabeth wasn't looking. And he never forgot to tell her that he supposed ~~she'd~~ soon be thinking

of getting married...
(E. of N. M., p. 150)

Old Kelly does not influence Emily artistically, but he often gives her sound romantic advice, and several times she questions him on important decisions in her life, although she knows that her Aunt Elizabeth would disapprove of taking a tin peddler's advice.

Aunt Elizabeth looks equally askance at Emily's friendship with Father Cassidy, a sympathetic Catholic priest who advises Emily on writing an epic, and encourages her to continue with her ambitions:

"Keep on, -- keep on writing poetry."

"You mean?" -- Emily was breathless.

"I mean you'll be able to do something by and by. Something -- I don't know how much -- but keep on -- keep on."

Emily was so happy she wanted to cry. It was the first word of commendation she had ever received except from her father -- and a father might have too high an opinion of one. This was different. To the end of her struggle Emily never forgot Father Cassidy's "keep on" and the tone in which he said it.

(E. of N. M., p. 210)

Father Cassidy's temporary role of mentor in Emily's life is more fully developed in yet another father-figure who is named Dean Priest. Dean was a college friend of Emily's real father, and he gives her new life when he saves her from falling from a rocky ledge. He even renames her in a sense, calling her Star, not because of her last name,

but because it suits her personality: "...Starr should be your first name. You look like a star -- you have a radiant sort of personality shining through you..." (E. of N. M., p. 277) Due to a slight physical deformity, Dean has devoted much of his life to reading and travel. He is able to teach Emily much that is valuable to her, and he is a discerning and helpful critic of her writing:

In Dean Priest Emily found, for the first time since her father had died, a companion who could fully sympathize...Emily showed him all the poetry and "descriptions" in her "Jimmy-book" and he read them gravely, and exactly as Father had done, making little criticisms that did not hurt her because she knew they were just.

(E. of N. M., pp. 282-3)

It is significant that such a multitude of father figures appear in this most autobiographical of Montgomery's books, and Dean's romantic interest in Emily shows traces of an Oedipal desire in the author.

Dean Priest is not the only male who is in love with Emily. Her young friends, Perry Miller and Teddy Kent, are both interested in her romantically. Emily likes Perry only as a friend, and laughs at his suggestion that they marry when they grow up, but she is honest enough to admit her attraction to Teddy:

That call always had an odd effect on Emily; it seemed to her that it fairly drew the heart out of her body -- and she had to follow it. She thought Teddy could have whistled her clear across the world with those three magic notes.

(E. of N. M., pp. 148-49).

The positive influence of male characters better prepares Emily to accept romantic involvement, and her strong desire to pursue her quest makes her less reluctant to leave the feminine hearth and childhood. Her romance is not blocked so much by herself as by Mrs. Kent, an example of the "terrible mother" who places obstacles in her son's path to creative expression and love. Once again the feminine influence is seen as a thwarting agent.

Emily is discouraged in her writing by her Aunt Elizabeth, who feels that such an activity is a total waste of time, but it is her teacher, Miss Brownell, who lives up to her name by trying to destroy Emily's creative abilities. She dislikes Emily because she is different from the other pupils, and when she catches Emily writing poetry in class, she ridicules the various pieces before all the children. In an episode loosely based on personal experience, Montgomery has Aunt Elizabeth demand that Emily kneel and ask forgiveness of Miss Brownell, but, unlike the real-life version, Emily is saved from such humiliation by Cousin Jimmy. Montgomery would often have fantasized about her own father rescuing her from painful situations.

Great Aunt Nancy's influence on Emily is more ambivalent. She certainly does not encourage her in her literary quest, advising her to hide her brains and show her ankles; she functions rather as the hag-guardian who is sometimes verbally abusive, but assists the heroine with material wealth. There is something slightly magical about her:

"Somehow, she looked like an old fairy -- an impish, tolerant old fairy, who might turn suddenly malevolent if you rubbed her the wrong way..." (E. of N. M., p. 248) She promises to leave Emily several heirlooms, including a fascinating "gazing ball," suggestive of creativity, but she also exerts a restrictive influence implicit in the name of her home, which is called Wyther Grange.

Elizabeth Murray fulfils the role of the unsympathetic step-mother in Emily's life. She is less yielding than Marilla Cuthbert, and she and Emily never become as close as Anne and Marilla, but there is, once again, a certain shared identity between the older woman and the girl. Emily, like her aunt, strongly favours the old fashioned customs and traditions of their clan, and Emily's ability to give "the Murray look" of her dead grandfather is a trait shared in common with Elizabeth, much to the discomfort of the older lady:

Elizabeth Murray turned paler, if that were possible. There were times when she could give the Murray look herself; it was not that which dismayed her -- it was the uncanny something which seemed to peer out behind the Murray look that always broke her will.

(E. of N. M., pp. 322-23)

It is the very similarities of temperament and strong will which create such extreme conflict between Emily and her aunt. Their outlooks on life are too-different for them to ever live together in complete accord, but Emily's defense of her letters to her father at least wins her Elizabeth's

respect for her as a person:

Elizabeth Murray had learned an important lesson -- that there was not one law of fairness for children and another for grown-ups. She continued to be as autocratic as ever -- but she did not do or say to Emily anything she would not have done or said to Laura had occasion called for it.

(E. of N. M., p. 326)

In the context of Emily's quest, it is more important that her Aunt Elizabeth at least tolerate her writing than display a great deal of affection for her.

Emily also shares a certain bond of identity with her friend Ilse Burnley; Elizabeth Waterston suggests the association of Ilse with ipse. The girls are distant cousins and both are motherless; Ilse's father is alive, but she seems as abandoned as Emily. Ilse's mother is thought to have run away with another man when Ilse was a baby, and Dr. Burnley's bitterness causes him to ignore and neglect his daughter. Emily's reaction to the story of Ilse's mother is one of shock and dismay at a woman abandoning her child, and she refuses to believe that it is true. Her strong desire to solve Beatrice Burnley's disappearance is fulfilled when Emily has a "vision" while suffering from a fever. Emily sees Ilse's mother fall into an old, uncovered well about which she had been writing a story before her illness, and when the well is explored, the body of Beatrice Burnley is really discovered. Elizabeth Waterston points out the incident's link between Emily's real world and her

creative ability:

The story is climaxed by a mysterious vision in which Emily's mind, in delirium, fuses three bits of memory, and prophetically "sees" a hidden truth (the "real" story of Ilse's lost mother). This prophetic second sight restores Ilse to her estranged father, by clearing the dead mother's reputation. It is an effective fable of art. It is also a good solution of the double plot, a fusion of Emily's "real" life among her friends and her life as poetic creator.⁷

Vindicating the falsely accused mother may be a way for Montgomery to work out any guilt for the resentment she might have felt towards her mother for "abandoning" her through death. The double distancing of the incident through her own and Emily's art may be indicative of Montgomery's unwillingness to deal consciously with such a painful subject.

Emily, like Montgomery, is able to exorcise her grief by writing it out:

For a moment she thought she would throw herself on her bed and cry. She couldn't bear all the pain and shame that were burning in her heart. Then her eyes fell on the old yellow account book on her little table. A minute later Emily was curled up on her bed... writing eagerly in the old book... As her fingers flew over the faded lines her cheeks flushed and her eyes shone. She forgot the Murrys although she was writing about them... In the writing, pain and humiliation had passed away. She only felt tired and rather happy.

(E. of N. M., p. 43)

⁷ Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 212.

Emily uses her art to objectify her personal feelings, and as she matures she learns to apply that same objectivity to judge the value of her work:

Every time she read her little hoard of manuscripts over she found some of which the fairy gold had unaccountably turned to withered leaves, fit only for the burning. Emily burned them, -- but it hurt her a little. Outgrowing things we love is never a pleasant process.

(E. of N. M., p. 314)

As she progresses, Emily encounters more severe critics of her work. From sympathetic relatives like her father and Cousin Jimmy, she proceeds to the more objective evaluations of Father Cassidy and Dean Priest. When Mr. Carpenter replaces Miss Brownell as her teacher, however, Emily decides to avail herself of his opinion, knowing that he will be totally honest with her. Mr. Carpenter encourages Emily to continue writing although he cautions her that her quest will be a difficult one. His encouragement gives Emily the necessary confidence in her identity as an artist to continue with her quest, and she expresses this newly won confidence characteristically through her writing:

Once she would have poured it into a letter to her father. She could no longer do that. But on the table before her lay a brand new Jimmy-book. She pulled it towards her, took up her pen, and on its first virgin page she wrote...I

am going to write a diary, that
it may be published when I die.
(E. of N. M., p. 351)

Her confidence allows Emily to project into the future and see her quest as successful.

During her three years of high school, Emily continues to develop personally and artistically, although she is still somewhat hampered by unsympathetic females. She stays in the town of Shrewsbury with her Aunt Ruth, who is much stricter and more narrow-minded than her aunt Elizabeth. Cousin Jimmy points out the difference between the two sisters:

"That was the Ruth Dutton look -- spite and malice and all un-charitableness. I hate Ruth Dutton. She laughs at my poetry -- not that she ever hears any of it. ...Elizabeth is a crank but she's sound as a nut, and Laura's a saint. But Ruth's worm-eaten."

(E. of N. M., p. 72)

Ruth's insensitivity to Jimmy's -- and Emily's -- poetry is one of her most serious shortcomings. She is a "...rather stupid, stubborn little barnyard fowl trying to train up to a skylark."⁸ and she is totally unsuited to the task.

She and Elizabeth both try to discourage Emily from continuing with her writing. Elizabeth will only allow Emily to attend high school if she will promise not to write any-

⁸ L. M. Montgomery, Emily Climbs (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1924), p. 147. All quotations from the novel are taken from this edition.

thing "that is not true" while she is getting her education, and Ruth tries to reduce Emily's spare time by providing numerous household chores for her.

Aunt Ruth keeps an equally watchful eye on Emily's occasional encounters with boys, mindful that Emily's mother, Juliet, disgraced the family by eloping. Ruth's sexual fears and repressions cause her to view Emily's innocent relationships with suspicion. There is an interesting link here between the girl and the older woman when Ruth is reminded by Cousin Jimmy that she, too, had once been placed in a somewhat compromising position. Ruth seems to be reliving her own anxieties about sex through her niece,

Mrs. Kent is another woman who stands in the way of Emily's relationship with Teddy. When the two young people first try to express their feelings for one another, Mrs. Kent comes along and turns the innocent moment into one of humiliation for Emily:

Everything had suddenly become ridiculous. Could anything be more ridiculous than to be caught here with Teddy, by his mother, at two o'clock at night — what was that horrid word she had lately heard for the first time? — oh, yes, spooning... spooning on George Horton's eighty-year-old tombstone? That was how other people would look at it. How could a thing be so beautiful one moment and so absurd the next? She was one horrible scorch of shame from

head to feet.

(E. C., p. 53)

The experience with Mrs. Kent comes immediately after Emily has been locked in the church with "Mad Mr. Morrison," who has a red hand as a birthmark, and goes about the country searching for his lost bride, Annie. The incident is probably symbolic of the exaggerated sexual fears of the adolescent:

He was looking for her, then -- she had heard that sometimes he followed young girls, thinking they were Annie. If he caught them he held them with one hand and stroked their hair and faces fondly with the other, mumbling foolish, senile endearments.

(E. C., p. 47)

Emily has stated earlier that the only two people whom she fears are Mr. Morrison and Mrs. Kent, and both become associated with sexuality, one as an overwhelming threat of passion, and the other as an obstacle to the expression of love. Mrs. Kent also represents a deterrent to Teddy's quest as an artist, which is another reason for her to be feared.

The many negative feminine influences on Emily are somewhat counteracted by the benevolence of several hag guardians. Great Aunt Nancy decides to pay for Emily's third year of schooling, which releases Emily from her promise that she will write no fiction while Elizabeth is paying for her education. Emily meets a strange old highland woman named Mistress McIntyre who tells Emily how she

once spanked the King when he was a little boy at Balmoral Castle. Emily later sends the story to a publisher, and its acceptance is an important step towards her recognition as a writer.

The story is seen by Miss Janet Royal of New York, who was once a Shrewsbury girl herself, and Miss Royal decides to visit the Island and offer Emily a position with a New York magazine. Miss Royal would seem to be a younger version of the hag fairy godmother, but she does not really know what is best for Emily as an artist:

"Oh, of course I know New Moon is a dear, quaint, lovely spot -- full of poetry and steeped in romance. It was just the place for you to spend your childhood in. But you must have a chance to grow and develop and be yourself. You must have the stimulus of association with great minds -- the training that only a great city can give."
(E. C., p. 288)

Miss Royal is not aware of the strong ties that exist between Emily's creativity and her natural surroundings. Like Montgomery, Emily needs the nurturing influence of nature and the associations of childhood:

How could she leave this old house that had sheltered and loved her... the graves of her kin by the Blair Water pond, the wide fields and haunted woods where her childhood dreams had been dreamed? All at once she knew she could not leave them -- she knew she had never really wanted to leave them.

(E. C., p. 297)

Montgomery's association of creativity with childhood surroundings is significant in light of the fact that her

own abilities were strongest when writing about the experiences of youth in an idyllic setting. The beauties of nature help to inspire Emily in her artistic development:

Emily always looked back to that night as a sort of milestone. Everything in it and of it ministered to her. It filled her with its beauty which she must later give to the world. She wished that she could coin the magic word that might express it. She fell asleep in this rapt mood -- dreamed that she was Sappho springing from the Leucadian rock...

(E. C., p. 171)

Emily's first published poem, "Owl's Laughter," has its basis in myth and nature: "I knew at once it wasn't human laughter -- it was more like the Puckish mirth of fairy folk, with just a faint hint of malice in it." (E. C., p. 104)

The poem is rejected six times, creating self-doubts in Emily which seem to be linked to her suspicions that Ilse is responsible for playing a cruel prank on her. When the poem is finally accepted Emily's confidence in herself and her friend is automatically restored:

The creative faculty, dormant through the wretched month just passed, suddenly burned in her soul again like a purifying flame. It swept away all morbid, poisonous, rambling things. All at once Emily knew that Ilse had never done that.

(E. C., p. 128)

Emily leaves her three years at Shrewsbury with more faith in herself, as a person and as a writer, convinced that the most difficult and the most useful lesson that she has

learned is "...to smile over a rejection slip." (E. C., p. 310) Her decision to stay on at New Moon, with maiden aunts and a childlike cousin, may seem to be a step backwards in her personal maturation, but it is the proper choice for her art. She envisions the fulfillment of her desires as a writer in terms of the natural word which will be largely responsible for that success:

I went at dusk tonight to that
 little pearly pool which has
 always been such a witching spot
 to linger near on spring evenings.
 ...It was unruffled by a breath
 and every leaf and branch and
 fern and blade of grass was
 mirrored in it. I looked in --
 and saw my face; and by an odd
 twist of reflection from a
 bending bough I seemed to wear
 a leafy garland on my head --
 like a laurel crown.

(E. C., p. 312)

Emily's ability to associate her creative talent with nature and childhood ties is a mark of progress in her quest.

In Emily's Quest the goals of love and literary success are finally fulfilled, although Emily's final union with Teddy Kent does not take place until she has attained her quest as an artist. Besides conforming to Montgomery's usual pattern of delayed sexual fulfillment, it seems almost necessary for Emily to achieve her success as a writer while still living among her childhood surroundings. Montgomery may have felt that Emily could not maintain an awareness of those forces most necessary to her inspiration if she married or moved away.

Cousin Jimmy still remains as an encouraging, "wise old man" to help her along her quest: "Every time I pass a new milestone on the Alpine Path Cousin Jimmy celebrates by giving me a new Jimmy-book." (E. Q., p. 18), but Emily's other father figures disappear, indicating that she can continue her quest alone now. Her old teacher, Mr. Carpenter, dies near the beginning of the book, cautioning her with his last words to "Beware of italics." (E. Q., p. 30) His death marks a significant change for Emily, who was fond of him personally, and valued his opinion as a critic:

"After I passed that point everything was different." All her life she had grown, as it seemed, by these fits and starts. Going on quickly and changelessly for months and years; then all at once suddenly realising that she had left some "low vaulted past" and emerged into some "new temple" of the soul more spacious than all that had gone before. Though always, at first, with a chill of change and a sense of loss.

(E. Q., pp. 30-31)

Dean Priest goes out of Emily's life also, but not until after they have become engaged to be married. Emily has always had a great respect for Dean's opinion of her writing, and a strong need for his approbation: "Emily knew deep down in her heart that she would never be able wholly to believe in herself until Dean Priest admitted that she could do something honestly worthwhile in its way." (E. Q., p. 36) Dean turns out to be a false godfather, however. He is jealous of Emily's preoccupation with her writing, and so he tells her that her first full length

manuscript does not have any serious merit. Emily puts too much faith in his verdict and burns her novel, and, perhaps as a result of her lack of confidence in her work, she falls down a flight of stairs and is temporarily crippled. Dean sees her through her illness, and because she needs his company and his moral support, she agrees to marry him. While she is engaged, Emily has no need or desire to write, but a psychic experience in which she saves Teddy from drowning, results in her breaking off with Dean and returning once again to her art. Dean has lost his place in Emily's life because he was false to his role as one who aids the quest, and Emily realizes that her own opinion of her work must be her final guide.

Emily's lack of confidence also causes her to misinterpret Teddy's feelings for her, and her misconceptions, coupled with Mrs. Kent's desires to prevent the match, delay her final union with Teddy for many years. She leads Teddy and Ilse to believe that she cares more for her writing than for love, and at one point, Ilse almost marries Teddy, although they don't love each other. Emily receives news of their engagement on the same day that her first book is released from the printers. —The themes of love and ambition seem always to be linked for Emily.

The publication of her book is a result of Cousin Jimmy's unshakeable belief in Emily. After she has tried various times to have it accepted, Emily gives up and stores the book away, but Jimmy sends it to the largest American

publisher, and tells Emily that her book has been accepted. Emily receives the news on her twenty-fourth birthday, as she is reading over some predictions she made about herself at fourteen. Her dreams of fame and romance seem very far away, but the acceptance of her book, The Moral of the Rose, renews her faith in herself: "...oh, I'm sorry for what I called you, little Fourteen. You weren't silly -- you were wise -- you knew." (E. Q., p. 189) Emily's book is a result of her surroundings, and its success justifies her decision to remain at New Moon, as even Miss Royal admits:

"You were right not to come to New York,"...You could never have written The Moral of the Rose here. Wild roses won't grow in city streets. And your story is like a wild rose, dear, all sweetness and unexpectedness, with sly little thorns of wit and satire... There's some magicry in it."
(E. Q., p. 205)

The comparison of Emily's art to a natural object is an apt one, but the rose is also a symbol of love, indicating that perhaps her friends have not been totally mistaken when they assume that writing is her first passion. Her primary quest has been one of artistic achievement, and even her personal happiness must be temporarily sacrificed on the altar of the Sacred Fire.

The "Pat" Books

The emphasis of the "Pat" books is more strongly focussed on the mother-figure than in any of Montgomery's other novels. The theme of the quest is not developed, although Pat of Silver Bush deals with the years in which Patricia Gardiner is growing up. Her greatest desire is to stay at home with her family; her greatest fear is of change of any kind. Unlike Anne and Emily, both of Pat's parents are living, and she has a second, more important mother figure in Judy Plum, the housekeeper at Silver Bush. Since Mrs. Gardiner is a semi-invalid, Judy takes most of the responsibility for raising Pat, and her love and sympathy and understanding make her the most positive mother-figure of all Montgomery's characters. Pat loves her real mother, but her ties to Judy are stronger. When she learns that a new baby is expected in the family she seems more concerned about its effect on her relationship with Judy than with her mother:

"Would you...would you like a baby better than me, Judy Plum?"

There was a tremble in Pat's voice.

"That I wouldn't, me jewel. Ye're Judy's girl and Judy's girl ye'll be forever...It do be yer mother I'm thinking av."

"Of course, if mother wants a baby I don't mind," conceded Pat.¹

Judy has a strong element of fantasy about her which appeals to children. She is always telling ghost stories or fairy tales, and she claims that her grandmother back in Ireland was a witch. Unlike the usual stern step-mother types like Marilla or Elizabeth Murray, Judy can understand and appreciate the mind of a child because she has remained young at heart. There is a bond between herself and Pat, just as there was one between Anne and Marilla, and Emily and Aunt Elizabeth, but in this case the common trait is one of fantasy rather than repression. It is the vision of the child which Judy and Pat have in common. When her family discover Pat dancing naked in the woods one night they are extremely shocked, misunderstanding Pat's motives entirely:

A warm brooding night...a night that surely belonged to the fairies. For the moment Pat could believe in them wholeheartedly again. Some strange bewitchment entered into her and crept along her veins. She remembered a Judy-story of an enchanted princess who had to dance naked in the moonlight every night of full moon in a woodland glen, and a sudden craving possessed her to dance thus in moonlight, too. Why not? There was nobody to see. It would be beautiful...beautiful.

(P. S. B., p. 144)

Only Judy, in whom there is "some wild strain of poetry" (p. 148) understands the child's sense of unity with the worlds of nature and fantasy.

¹ L. M. Montgomery, Pat of Silver Bush (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 1933), pp. 17-18. All quotations from the novel are from this edition.

Since Montgomery never really knew her own mother, she was unable to create any fully realized fictional version of the character. The mothers of her heroines are either dead, or they are shadowy, ineffectual women whose influence on their daughters is minimal. Mrs. Gardiner is one of these vague, partially-drawn figures, but Judy represents the type of mother substitute who would satisfy any child's desires, supplying all the necessary physical and emotional comforts in the sheltering atmosphere of her kitchen:

The kitchen was a cheery place...
 The space between stove and table
 was covered by a big, dark-red
 rug with three black cats hooked
 in it. ...Judy's living black cat
 sat on the bench and thought hard.
 Two fat kittens were sleeping in
 a patch of sunlight on the floor.
 And, as if that were not enough
 in the cat line, there were three
 marvellous kittens in a picture on
 the wall...Judy's picture, like-
 wise brought out from Ireland.
 ...Cats and kittens might come and
 go at Silver Bush, but Judy's
 kittens were eternally young and
 frisky.

(P. S. B., pp. 32-33)

The association of mother-symbols such as cats and kitchen reinforce the importance of Judy's maternal role. Cats figure in most of Montgomery's books since she was very fond of them herself, but in the Silver Bush novels cats are mentioned more frequently, and take on greater importance. The three kittens in the picture fulfil Pat's desire that nothing will be changed.

The immense importance of a satisfactory mother-figure is evident in Pat's extreme fear of change in her family

life. She experiences real anxiety over the threat of her sister living temporarily with an aunt, and the possibility that her father will decide that they move out west makes her life unbearable for a time. It would seem that once Montgomery finally portrayed a heroine who is surrounded by a loving family, including a satisfactory mother-figure, she became preoccupied with the mutability of the situation. The longing for the father, which is predominant in most of the novels, is here replaced by the more deeply hidden desires for the mother, and the achievement of that desire requires that all the heroine's energies be spent in trying to maintain her happy environment.

The longing for the mother is repeated in the character of Jingle, a young friend of Pat's. It is significant here that the child who has been abandoned by the mother is a boy; the usual father-daughter relationship is reversed to a mother-son situation, although the boy's real name, Hilary, is rather ambivalent as to gender, like Pat's own name. Jingle lives on a neighbouring farm with an aunt and uncle who care very little about him. His dearest wish is to receive a visit from his mother, who has remarried and lives in Honolulu, but she takes no notice of her son, even at Christmas:

His mother had not sent him anything
 ...not even a letter. It took all the
 comfort Jingle got out of the blue-
 eyed dog to keep back the tears when
 he remembered this. He tried to make
 excuses for her. Perhaps in Honolulu,
 that land of eternal summer, they

didn't have Christmases.

(P. S. B., p. 107)

Jingle's mother eventually comes to see her son for a brief visit, but unlike the various fathers who return to their waiting daughters, there is no loving reunion between the mother and her boy. Pat is secure of her loving mother-figure, but she is the exception; Jingle's mother is a return to the usual pattern of vaguely drawn women:

She was like a shadow...beautiful
...elusive...not real. And this was
Jingle's mother...who called every-
body, even Larry Gordon, "darling"
and now and then flung a word to her
son as one might throw a bone to a
hungry dog.

(P. S. B., p. 215)

Montgomery was unable to visualize the return of the mother as a happy reunion; it was so impossible a dream that it was doomed to be a disappointment. Only in the substitute figure of Judy Plum could there be any real maternal closeness.

There are no significant father-figures in Pat's life. Her own father is as shadowy as her mother, and none of her uncles are fully developed characters. The most important male in Pat's life is her older brother Sidney, with whom she has a close relationship:

"Sid and I are never going to part.
We'll neither of us marry but just
live on here at Silver Bush and take
care of everything. We have it all
settled. ...I don't want anybody
but Sid. The girls in school are
nice but I don't love any of them.
I don't want to love any one or
anything but my own family and
Silver Bush."

(P. S. B., p. 70)

Pat wishes her entire life to center around the family nucleus, and so she concentrates much of her affection on her brother because he is part of her life at home. Her wish that they remain unmarried and stay at Silver Bush together is an attempt to establish some sort of marital relationship with Sid. If she could marry her brother, then she would be safe forever from the threat of leaving the Physical Hearth. Her feelings also conform to a phase of romance where "The archetype of erotic innocence is less commonly marriage than the kind of "chaste" love that precedes marriage; the love of brother for sister, or of two boys for each other."² Pat experiences several school-girl romances, but her loyalties always veer back to her home:

When he lifted her out at the gate Pat looked at Silver Bush. It seemed to look back at her reproachfully. It struck her that she had been thinking more about Harris Hynes that winter than of dear Silver Bush. She was suddenly repentant.

(P. S. B., p. 256)

She does not wish herself or Sid to become attached to anyone outside of the family circle.

Pat is frequently worried over Sid's attraction to a rather coarse and physical girl named May Binnie, but she is pleased when her brother falls in love with her friend Bets. Bets is Pat's closest friend for many years and yet she is never very fully realized. She seems to be more of a vague extension of Pat: "Bets and I were born on the same

² Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 199-200.

day. That makes us a kind of twins, doesn't it?" (P. S. B., p. 128) Allowing the possibility of love between Bets and Sid might be a way of distancing the incestuous ties between him and Pat. Bets dies just as she reaches maturity, however. Part of Pat will never have to change; another maiden will remain forever in her girlhood.

The loss of Bets is the first of many partings in Pat's life. As her brothers and sisters leave home and marry she depends more and more on Judy and on her home itself:

It was such a loyal old house...
always faithful to those who loved
it. ...The house remembered her
whole life. It had always been the
same...it had never changed...not
really. Only little surface changes.
How she loved it. ...Life could
never be empty at Silver Bush.

(P. S. B., pp. 328-29)

Pat always remains loyal to her home and family, and not even the inducement of love or marriage can tempt her to leave. Since she cannot break her ties to the maternal hearth, they are broken for her. In Mistress Pat, she loses almost everyone for whom she cares. Her favourite sister marries and settles in China, and Sid brings May Binnie home to Silver Bush as his wife. Judy dies of a heart condition, and to complete the series of disasters, Silver Bush burns to the ground. Such a number of catastrophes seems rather melodramatic, but it is indicative of the strength of Pat's feelings towards her home that Silver Bush must be destroyed before she will leave it. Mother-love and a sense of security are viewed as the most important emotions in her life, to be retained at all costs. Pat accepts an alternative only

when it remains as her only choice.

Jingle returns to Pat after Silver Bush has been destroyed and offers his love. She has now learned that it is Jingle instead of Sid who can offer her unchanging devotion and since he is an architect by profession, he can also offer her a new home in which to feel secure:

"Then we'll go home...home. Listen to me rolling the word under my tongue. I've never had a home, you know. ...Judy's white kittens are already hanging on the wall of our living room and that old china dog you gave me years ago is squatting on the mantelpiece."³

Jingle shares Pat's love of Judy as a mother-figure, and in his deep love of home and his desire to keep up the old Silver Bush traditions he becomes closer to Pat than her real brother, who has wasted his life with May Binnie. Pat's new home will be, to some extent, a continuation of her life at Silver Bush, but that home will be out west, not on the Island. The final break with the maternal is Pat's exile from the home of her youth, and although she fully accepts Jingle's offer of love, the setting for their reunion is the family graveyard on an autumn evening. The sense of renewal is tempered by the quiet tone of the ending:

The old graveyard heard the most charming sound in the world...the low yielding laugh of a girl held prisoner by her lover.

(M. P., p. 338)

³ L. M. Montgomery, *Mistress Pat* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1935), pp. 336-37. All quotations from the book are taken from this edition.

Pat acquiesces graciously, even gladly, but the final image reminds the reader subtly that there is at least an element of compromise in her acceptance of a love other than home and family.

Montgomery's Single Novels

The mythical, narrative, and psychological patterns which Montgomery developed in her serial novels are also present in her single works. *Kilmeny of the Orchard* deals with a young woman who suffers from a psychosomatic muteness, supposedly inherited from her mother, who refused to speak for many months. The central figure of the story is Eric Marshall, who visits the Island and there meets and falls in love with Kilmeny. Unlike Montgomery's usual heroes, who tend to be fairly realistic, Eric is portrayed as a somewhat idealized figure:

He was not only clever and good to look upon, but he possessed that indefinable charm of personality which is quite independent of physical beauty or mental ability. ...He was a rich man's son, with a clean young manhood behind him and splendid prospects before him.⁴⁰

The perfection of the hero seems in perfect accord, however, with the fairy-tale atmosphere of the entire book. The Island in general, and the orchard where Kilmeny plays her violin in particular, are viewed as magical places where a stray wanderer may be placed under a spell:

"Perhaps I have wandered into an enchanted orchard, and been

⁴⁰ L. M. Montgomery, *Kilmeny of the Orchard* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Press, 1910), p. 4. All quotations from the novel are from this edition.

outwardly transformed into an ogre. Now that I have come to think of it, there is something quite uncanny about the place. - Anything might happen here."

(K. O., p. 65)

The mythical aspects of the setting are plentiful, but Montgomery, with her usual ability to temper myth with reality, retains enough domestic detail to surround the idealized hero and heroine with some convincing secondary characters. As Elizabeth Waterston observes, "...her Eden is a clearly realized orchard, with "real toads" -- and an indoor world of antimacassars."⁴

Kilmeny's guardians, an elderly aunt and uncle, are clearly drawn characters, although they also fit the archetype of the guardians who watch over the maiden until her true love appears. They keep Kilmeny in seclusion to protect her from being hurt because of her impediment, and her lack of contact keeps her childlike even when she is grown: "What a child she was -- what a beautiful, ignorant child, utterly unskilled in the art of hiding her feelings." (K. O., p. 92) Kilmeny follows Montgomery's pattern of delayed maturation; the girl remains a child playing in the orchard until the intrusion of a man into her Eden.

In this case there is no reluctance on the part of the heroine to accept the man's love other than her own feelings of inferiority. Kilmeny has never seen her own reflection,

⁴ Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 205.

and is afraid that she is ugly, but Eric presents her with a mirror, thus revealing her true identity to herself. It is also because of her love for Eric that Kilmeny is finally able to speak, warning him of an attack by Neil Gordon, a gypsy boy who is also in love with Kilmeny. Love is thus a means of freeing the child to become a woman, rather than a threat against the carefree existence of youth. Montgomery wrote this tale around the same time as Anne of Green Gables, while she was still living in Cavendish, and caring for her ailing grandmother. This may explain why love is viewed as a release for the heroine, and why there is less reluctance to leave the world of childhood. The book may be an expression of Maud's own fantasies of a lover who would rescue her from the rather tedious existence in which she was trapped.

If Kilmeny of the Orchard represents Montgomery's fantasies of an ideal love, then A Tangled Web, one of her two attempts at adult fiction, stresses the unreliability of such ideals to bring true happiness in love. The story concerns the inheritance of an old heirloom jug, left by the hag-guardian, Aunt Becky, to be fought over by the two clans of Darks and Penhallows. In attempting to win the jug for themselves, many members of both families experience important changes in their lives, especially changes in their attitudes towards romance. Gay Penhallow, who for a while is broken-hearted when her fiance deserts her for her more sophisticated cousin, comes to realize that her original feelings have been misguided:

The old enchantment had gone. She saw him as she had never seen him before -- as her clan had always seen him. A handsome fellow who thought every girl who looked at him fell in love with him; shallow, selfish.⁵

Donna Dark, a war widow who has been living only for the memory of her dead husband, suddenly realizes how foolish she has been behaving and decides to accept the love of Peter Penhallow, who just as suddenly realizes that he loves Donna instead of hating her. Jocelyn Dark had left her husband on their wedding day because she had fallen in love at first sight with the best man. For years she has lived alone, keeping her fantasy love alive, but she, too, is disillusioned when the object of her dreams returns to the Island for a visit:

This could not be Frank Dark --
oh this could never be the slim,
gallant stripling to whom she
had so suddenly lost her heart
on her wedding night. This!
Fat; half-bald; nose red; eyes
puffy and bloodshot; sallow
jowls; shabby. With failure
written all over him. She saw
him as he was; worse -- as he
had always been under all the
charm of his vanished youth.

(T. W., pp. 223-24)

Montgomery's preoccupation with the disillusionment of idealized romantic love has a basis in her personal history. During her early years of teaching at a district school, she

⁵ L. M. Montgomery, A Tangled Web (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1931), p. 298. All quotations from the novel are from this edition.

fell in love with a man of inferior background and talents:

I loved a man...It was emphatically the love of my life. Yet, mark this -- I did not respect him -- I did not admire him in the least. ...Yet I loved him as I can never love any other man. ...This man died and I have always been thankful that it ended so: because if he had lived, I daresay I couldn't have helped marrying him and it would have made a most disastrous union in most respects.⁶

Montgomery's distrust of her own success with romantic love is reflected in Anne's rejection of Roy Gardener for the more suitable Gilbert Blythe, and this pattern is repeated many times in A Tangled Web. The three younger heroines of the book each discard an empty dream for a more satisfying reality of love, and Margaret Penhallow, a middle-aged spinster, decides that she will be more contented by adopting a little boy than by marrying an aging dandy simply to have a husband. One of Montgomery's chief reasons for finally marrying Ewan MacDonald was to have her own family; like Margaret, she probably would have been happier raising children without the hindrance of a man whom she could never truly love.

Aunt Becky is the hag-guardian for all four of the heroines, not only because she keeps the treasured heirloom jug, but because the events surrounding the jug's disposal bring each of the women love and happiness. Gay Penhallow

⁶ Mollie Gillen, The Wheel of Things, pp. 91-2.

is jilted when her cousin Nan stays to see who will get the jug, giving Gay time to realize that another cousin, Roger, is really the right man for her. Donna Dark and Peter Penhallow meet and fall in love at Aunt Becky's last "levee", and the jug brings Frank Dark home for a visit, allowing Jocelyn to realize that it is really her husband whom she loves. Margaret is on the verge of a reluctant marriage when she learns that an old copy of Pilgrim's Progress, left to her by Aunt Becky, is a rare edition. The money from its sale allows her to buy a small house and adopt a motherless boy with whom she has become friends.

The "wise old man" archetype is also present in the book. Oswald Dark is "The Moon Man", a rather mad individual whose one happiness is the moon's beauty:

Oswald Dark was now considered a harmless lunatic. He wandered at will over the pleasant red roads of the Island, and on moonlight nights sang happily as he strode along, with an occasional genuflection to the moon. On moonless nights he was bitterly unhappy and wept to himself in woods and remote corners.

(T. W., p. 50)

The Moon Man encounters the heroines occasionally, and his caution is always to beware of desiring too much, reinforcing the theme that some idealistic notions are as unattainable as the moon is to a poor madman. When the jug becomes nothing but a source of trouble and contention, the Moon Man solves the problem by smashing this last false ideal against a wall, restoring both families to reality once again.

Montgomery's second adult novel, The Blue Castle, pre-

sents a convincing portrait of a repressed, hag-ridden woman of twenty-nine who reaches a belated decision to follow her quest for identity and love. Valancy's struggle for individuality is perhaps more moving than that of Anne or Emily because she feels more desperately that she has only one chance to succeed. There is no time for games or evasions in Valancy's life:

The Blue Castle is energetic and tough. It is an amazingly blunt story of a frustrated woman's attempt to find a real life in defiance of family tabus and conventions.⁷

Valancy's father is dead, and the part of the cruel step-mother is played by her own mother. Mrs. Stirling is, with the possible exception of Jane Stuart's grandmother in Jane of Lantern Hill, the most insensitive and tyrannical woman in any of Montgomery's books. She is disappointed in Valancy first of all because she is not a boy, and secondly because she has failed to secure a husband. Unlike Marilla Cuthbert and Elizabeth Murray, Valancy's mother does not have one redeeming quality. She is critical and ungenerous towards her daughter and always attributes to her some sinister motive for every action. Her choice of leisure activity provides a good example of her personality:

No doubt her mother was sitting in the room this lovely June evening playing solitaire -- and cheating. Valancy knew that Mrs. Frederick

⁷ Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 213.

always cheated. She never lost a game.⁸

The Physical Hearth offers no inducement to Valancy. Her mother's house is bleak and depressing, and Valancy is not allowed even to beautify her own bedroom. Her world of reality is one of urban grime and poverty:

The ugliness of the view always struck her like a blow; the ragged fence, the tumble-down old carriage shop in the next lot, plastered with crude, violently coloured advertisements; the grimy railway station beyond, with the awful derelicts that were always hanging around it even at this early hour.

(B. C., p. 16)

Valancy has always escaped this dreadful reality by creating for herself a fantasy life of a blue castle where she receives the attentions of numerous admirers. As she has matured, her concept of the hero has changed from an idealized figure to a man who resembles Barney Snaith, a mysterious figure who lives alone on a small Muskoka island. As Valancy proceeds in her quest she exchanges the dream of the blue castle for the reality of a small shack on the island when she and Barney marry.

Barney is whispered about by all the respectable townspeople as a criminal of some sort, and Valancy's association with him is indicative of her feelings of rebellion against her staid, suppressed existence. She goes to work as a

⁸ L. M. Montgomery, The Blue Castle (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1926), p. 124. All quotations from the novel are from this edition.

housekeeper for Roaring Abel, a likeable old reprobate and chronic drinker whose daughter, Cissy, has given birth to an illegitimate child several years earlier. Cissy's baby has since died and when Valancy learns that Cissy is dying too she decides that she will stay at Roaring Abel's and take care of her old schoolmate. The knowledge that she herself has a fatal heart disease and will not live more than a year frees Valancy from her fear of her family's disapproval. She cuts herself off from the world in which she was raised and lives among the outlaws of polite society, relishing her new freedom from convention.

After Cissy Kay's death Valancy asks Barney Snaith if he will marry her, explaining the circumstances of her illness. He agrees and takes her to live with him on his island in Muskoka, where they live a secluded and idyllic existence, free of all the restrictions imposed upon Valancy all of her life:

...Valancy thought they were splendidly free. It was amazing to be able to sit up half the night and look at the moon if you wanted to. To be late for meals if you wanted to -- she who had always been rebuked so sharply by her mother...if she were one minute late. ...Not come home for meals at all if you wanted to. ...Just sit and do nothing in the beautiful silence if you wanted to. In short, do any fool thing you wanted to whenever the notion took you.

(B. C., p. 187)

Valancy and Barney share a love of natural beauty and spend much of their time exploring various secluded spots.

When Valancy lived with her mother in town, her only link with nature was reading books by a naturalist named John Foster. It was because of a sentence in a John Foster book that Valancy summoned the courage to break away from her family bonds, and she looks upon him as a sort of spiritual father. At the end of the book Valancy learns that Barney is really John Foster, as well as the son of a patent medicine millionaire whose concoctions have long been the sworn remedies of the entire Stirling clan. Valancy's prince turns out to be her fairy godfather as well, giving her love, riches and inspiration. The story-book aspect of the novel is completed when Valancy learns that her doctor mailed her the wrong letter, and that there is nothing seriously wrong with her heart. Although the ending is rather contrived and overdone, Valancy's desperate quest for a life of her own and the fulfillment of that desire in an idyllic, natural setting give the book strength and credibility.

Magic for Marigold once again deals with a young girl's search for identity and acceptance. The book contains a certain awareness of myth from the very beginning:

Once upon a time -- which, when you come to think of it, is really the only proper way to begin a story -- the only way that really smacks of romance and fairyland...⁹

⁹L. M. Montgomery, Magic for Marigold (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd. 1929), p. 1. All quotations from the novel are from this edition.

The story opens with a gathering of the Lesley clan to celebrate "Old Grandmother's" birthday and to find a name for the new baby whose father has died before her birth. None of the many names suggested are considered appropriate, and Marigold is later named after the doctor who saves her life, and who becomes one of several mother-figures for the child. Montgomery had depicted positive and negative mother-figures in her books, representing both her desire for a close relationship with her mother, and her feelings of resentment about her mother's death. There were also mixed sentiments of gratitude and rebellion towards the grandmother who raised her. By creating several mother-figures in one story, Montgomery is able to work through all these feelings simultaneously:

This kind of representation typically expresses ambivalent feelings, the conjunction of which (particularly when hostility is repressed) is so intolerable that the ambivalence is dealt with defensively by decomposing the loved and hated...into two separate and seemingly unrelated persons.¹⁰

The older Marigold gives a second life to the child when she cures her, and she marries the girl's favourite uncle and father-figure. This marriage strengthens the bond between the two Marigolds. The older Marigold is also somewhat of an indepen-

¹⁰ Robert Rogers, A Psychoanalytic Study of The Double in Literature (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), p. 5.

dent "masculine" thinker, perhaps helping to fill the girl's lack of fatherly influence.

Marigold's mother is a somewhat weak character, and her grandmother is a stern, although loving, example of the step-mother figure. Her great-grandmother is the hag-guardian who doesn't seem totally human:

Old Grandmother was a gnomish dame of ninety-two who meant to live to be a hundred. A tiny, shrunken, wrinkled thing with flashing black eyes. There was a Puckish hint of malice in most things she said or did.

(M. M., p. 5)

Old Grandmother is aware of the importance of her role in Marigold's life. The treasure which she wishes to bequeath to the child is the benefit of her own experience with life: "I must live long enough for her to remember me... Somebody must give that child a few hints to live by, whether she's to be minx or madonna." (M. M., p. 21)

Female characters provide most of the practical influence in the book. The male figures are usually viewed as amiable but rather quixotic characters who are not to be totally depended upon. Into this category fall the traveling Weed Man, and Lazarre, the Lesley's hired man, who

...could carve wonderful baskets out of plum-stones and make fairy horns out of birch-bark, and he always knew the right time of the moon to do anything. ...Lazarre, who firmly believed in fairies and witches and "ghosties" of all kinds, lived therefore in a world of romance.

(M. M., pp. 43-44)

The emphasis on practical female influence leads Marigold to her final acceptance of herself as a woman. Much of the book concerns her various experiences with friendship, the most important of which is her relationship with a fantasy child named Sylvia. Marigold does not outgrow her need for Sylvia until she becomes friends with a boy on a neighbouring farm nicknamed Budge, a name suggesting movement or change. In order to impress Budge, Marigold tells him about Sylvia, but once she has shared this dream she finds that its power has faded: "Sylvia wasn't just the same. Not so vivid -- so living -- so real." (M.M., p. 319)

The book's final chapter is entitled "Her Chrism of Womanhood," and deals with the older Marigold instructing the younger about her relationship with the opposite sex:

"You must not expect to have Budge wholly to yourself, dear, as you had Sylvia. ...Budge will always be coming back to you. He finds something in your companionship Tad can't give him. He'll come for it, never fear. But you must share him with others. We -- women -- must always share."
(M. M., p. 327)

The maternal influence stresses sacrifice and passivity. Marigold is taught that she should not compete for a boy's attention, but rather accept the traditional male-female roles and relationship. Her final remark, "...I'll always be here for him to come back to," (M. M., p. 328) is a forerunner of Pat Gardiner's strong desire to stay close to home. The Physical Hearth has claimed another votary.

Jane of Lantern Hill tries to establish a balance

between the male and female influences, and it also sets up a tension between a world of bleak, urban reality and one of natural beauty and fantasy. Like The Blue Castle, it takes place, in part, outside of P.E.I., but Jane is able to escape her grandmother's gloomy Toronto mansion every summer and return to her father and the beloved Island. The Toronto setting is representative of her repressed existence, just as the beauty of the Island reflects her feelings of security and confidence in herself. In terms of the quest, the two worlds are symbolic of the hero and the enemy:

The enemy is associated with winter, darkness, confusion, sterility, moribund life and old age, and the hero with spring, dawn, order, fertility, vigor and youth.¹¹

Even the seasonal cycle reflects the change in Jane's surroundings: in summer she visits her Island paradise, in winter she returns to the exile of a forbidding environment:

Gay Street was dark and dingy, lined with forbidding, old-fashioned brick houses, whose tall, shuttered, blinded windows could never have thought of winking at anybody.¹²

Elizabeth Waterston makes some interesting observations about this division of Jane's world. She states:

¹¹ Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 187-88.

¹² L. M. Montgomery, Jane of Lantern Hill (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd, 1937 p. i. All quotations from the novel are taken from this edition.

This small and poignant version of Orpheus and Eurydice ends in pastoral reunion and fulfillment. ...If, as Professor Northrop Frye says, literature is "two dreams, a wish-fulfilment dream and an anxiety dream, that are focussed together, like a pair of glasses, and become a fully conscious vision," this last book stakes a claim to literature. Not just "children's literature," either, for both Jane's anxiety and her dream are successful metaphors of adult psychic reality.¹³

In Toronto Jane must answer to her second name, Victoria. She and her timid mother live with Jane's grandmother, old Mrs. Kennedy who had disapproved of Jane's father, and takes out her resentment of Jane. She is cold and sarcastic to her granddaughter, making her so nervous that she continually makes foolish mistakes, appearing to be rather stupid. Jane's chief source of pleasure is to create a world of fantasy in which she performs duties capably:

For three years now Jane had been going on dream voyages to the moon. It was a shimmering world of fancy where she lived very splendidly and sated some deep thirst in her soul...Before she had found the trick of going to the moon, Jane had tried to get into the looking glass as Alice did.

(J. L. H., p. 30)

Jane exchanges the fantasy of trying to find her^s identity through the topsy-turvey world of the looking glass to one where she identifies with constructive action. Jane does not live in idle splendor on the moon, she polishes it because it is

¹³ Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery," p. 216.

silver, and finds immense satisfaction in being useful. When she goes to stay with her father she takes on the total responsibility for keeping house, and it is through this experience that she gains self-confidence:

...nothing in her new life amazed her more than the ease with which she liked people. ...She did not realize that the change was in herself. She was no longer rebuffed, frightened, awkward because she was frightened. Her foot was on her native heath and her name was Jane.

(J. L. H., p. 116)

Besides giving her the opportunity to prove her domestic capabilities, Jane's father instructs her in many subjects, making her studies interesting so that she improves rapidly when she returns to school in the fall. The hired man from a neighbouring farm, and an old sailor named Timothy Salt, also teach Jane various skills, each boasting of their pupil's quickness to learn. Jane is also befriended by a hag-guardian figure who helps her to understand the reasons for her parents' separation. "Little Aunt Em" is another of those slightly eerie old women:

"She's about as high as my knee and so thin she once blew over the harbor and back. But she's a wise old goblin. She lives on that little side-road...and does weaving and spinning and dyeing rug rags."

(J. L. H., p. 162)

Jane learns from Little Aunt Em that her parents' separation was mainly the fault of her grandmother's interference, and the jealousy of her father's sister. She has been puzzled as to why two people whom she loves so dearly have

stopped caring for each other, but once she learns that her parents are still in love, she tries to bring them together once again. She recognizes that Toronto is a false hearth, and that she must somehow bring her mother back to the nurturing influence of the Island. This is eventually accomplished when Jane becomes dangerously ill, and her mother is sent for to take care of her. The choice between the Sacred Fire and the Physical Hearth is never made in this book, a compromise between the two is achieved where the heroine provides the balancing force between the two:

There would be no more misunderstandings. She, Jane, understood them both and could interpret them to each other. And have an eye on the housekeeping as well.
(J. L. H., p. 297)

Jane chooses a domestic world, but not a passive role.

Even after her parents' reconciliation, half the year will be spent in Toronto; but she and her parents will live in a new part of town, away from the forbidding presence of her grandmother. Such a compromise shows that the world of reality is no longer perceived in terms of a nightmare. The chasm between Jane's two worlds has narrowed, and she is now able to carry her new identity over into both areas of her life.

Conclusion

The quest for identity is seldom a straightforward process for Montgomery's heroines, perhaps in part because they are female. The previous lack of models in Victorian literature, the mythic tradition of woman as the "fount of permanence," and the author's personal longings for the mother as well as the father, would all stand in the way of her heroines achieving independence and maturity. The girls complicate the completion of the quest by a reluctance to leave behind the world of childhood, which they associate closely with fantasy and myth. The tension resulting from this conflict between conscious adult reality and a mythic awareness results in the need for psychological interpretations to be imposed sometimes upon the author's use of archetypes.

Recurrent narrative and psychological patterns in her work frequently give added insight into Montgomery's particular use of myth. Leslie Fiedler, in his article on "Archetype and Signature," discusses the importance of an author's personal interpretation, or "Signature" of a general archetypal pattern:

A final way back into the world of Archetype, available even in our atomized culture, is an extension of the way instinctively sought by the Romantics, down through the personality of the poet, past his particular

foibles and eccentricities, to his unconscious core, where he becomes one with us all in the presence of our ancient Gods...¹

The psychological implications imposed upon the archetypal quest by Montgomery and her heroines makes it necessary to examine her work from more than one perspective. Her desire to prolong and relive the experiences of her own childhood was achieved through her ability to universalize personal encounters and perceptions within her art, and has resulted in a canon of work which continues to allow her readers to become part of a common ritual:

Perhaps art can be the channel by which we rediscover the island. L. M. Montgomery's world of poetry, virginity, and pantheism still opens for the adult reader the way back to his own world of young realization: he "wakes, to dream again."²

The rituals of childhood are thus perpetuated through the shared aesthetic experience of Montgomery and her readers.

¹ Leslie Fiedler, "Archetype and Signature," Literature In Critical Perspectives, Walter K. Gordon, ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968), pp. 524-25.

² Elizabeth Waterston, "L. M. Montgomery, p. 219.

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8

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